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Hot Spring

A Journal of Commitment

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TIGER RALLY IN GENEVA

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VENNPURA S.C LÜTZELFLÜH
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- September 1996 -

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Hot Spring
A journal of commitment

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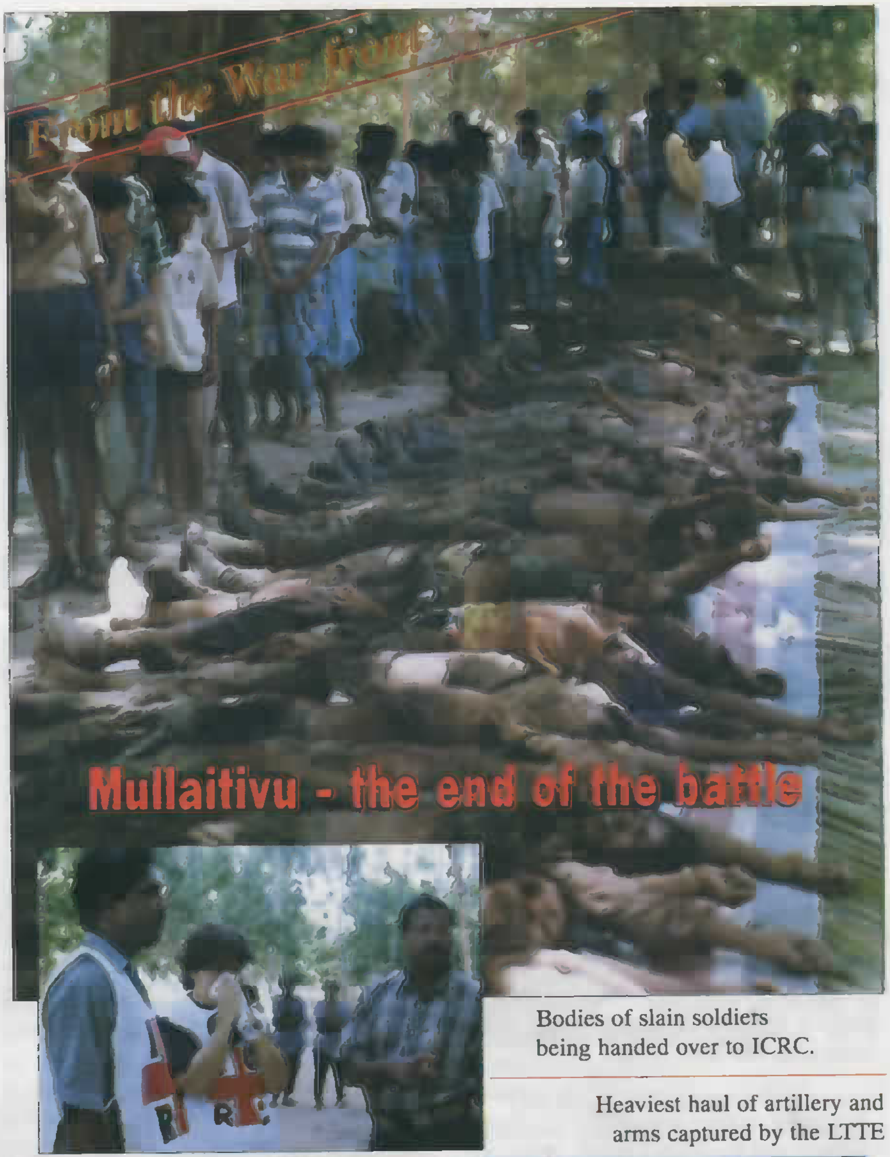

From the War front
Mullaitivu - the end of the battle

Bodies of slain soldiers being handed over to ICRC.

Heaviest haul of artillery and arms captured by the LTTE

Note from the Publishers

Dear Reader,

We regret having to inform you that our Editor S. Sivanayagam was scheduled to undergo coronary by-pass surgery on 10th September. While he was able to contribute substantially - even from his hospital bed - in the editing and preparation of this issue, an enforced rest after surgery would mean that his active contribution would be denied to us for a few weeks. We hope readers will bear with us over any consequent delays and shortcomings in the publication of HOT SPRING. Thank you.

-The Publishers

“WHAT THEY SAY”

"The President says that the war will be over by next year, and as she is the commanding chief we have to take her word, although I don't believe a word of what she says".

- Anura Bandaranaike of the UNP and brother of the President in an interview with SUNDAY LEADER, Colombo, August 04.

* * * * *

"Premadasa ran a one-man show, but it was an efficient one man show. Today, we are having a one-woman show, which is totally inefficient"

- Anura Bandaranaike in the same interview.

* * * * *

"Mr.Attorney General... you will no doubt agree with me that as far as language is concerned what your mother tongue means to you is what mine means to me ..."

- Justice C.V.Wigneswaran, speaking first in his mother tongue (Tamil), then in Sinhala and finally in English, at the ceremonial sitting of the Judiciary held to welcome him. (Cecil V.Wikramanayake, WEEKEND EXPRESS, Colombo, August 10-11)

* * * * *

"We will take steps not to allow another Prabhakaran to surface when we bring an end to North-east terrorism and provide a solution to the ethnic problem by August 1997"

- President Chandrika speaking at a public meeting in Ratnapura , quoted in the WEEKEND EXPRESS, August 10-11.

* * * * *

"If anyone has an idea that the war can be finished quickly, he is living in a pipe dream.This war has already gone on longer than the Second World War. You see what has happened in Jaffna. The same will happen to the rest of the country as well. You see what has happened to part of the Fort area in Colombo. People who talk of military solutions after all that has happened all these years, simply don't know what they are talking about".

- TULF President M.Sivasithamparam in an interview with SUNDAY OBSERVER, August 11.

* * * * *

"Something's terribly wrong in the state of Lanka... If my feeling of the pulse of the people is right, I think a general despondency is setting in, in the minds of the people ."

- Sri Lankan Cabinet Minister M.H.M.Ashraff, in an interview with SUNDAY TIMES, Colombo.

* * * * *

"So what do we hope for today as the PA begins its third year in office? That Velupillai Prabhakaran suffers a sudden stroke? That the economy suddenly takes off like a rocket to Mars? overall there seems to be a sense of despair and gloom that the country is plummeting into something like Dante's Inferno ..."

- SUNDAY TIMES editorial, August 18.

International

"The government should resign immediately or a civil disobedience campaign would be started that would be taken to its logical conclusion"

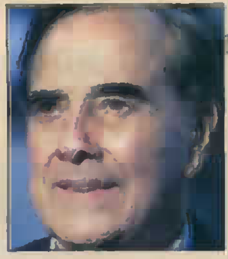
- Pakistan opposition leader Nawaz Sharif (Reuters, Aug.13)

* * * * *

"Uncle Sam flaunts high-handedness at United Nations...The United States is trying to manipulate the choice of UN Secretary General to achieve its goal of controlling the United Nations".

- PEOPLE'S DAILY, Chinese Communist Party's official newspaper.

* * * * *



"And when I am President, every man and every woman in our armed forces will know the president is their Commander-in Chief. Not Boutros Boutros Ghali, or any other UN Secretary General".

- Republican candidate for the American Presidency Bob Dole, in his acceptance speech.

* * * * *

"The next Olympics should also have brass, tin, wood, plastic (medals) to give our players a chance to bring glory to the nation"

- From a cartoon in the TIMES OF INDIA, where the nation's athletes were criticized for winning just a single bronze medal.

* * * * *

"He is an inept "Napolean", bent on more death and destruction"

- Russian National Security Adviser Alexander Lebed, on General Kulikov, leading the Chechnyan war.

* * * * *

"Lebed is a Russian. But he is a fighter. And a fighter knows when he has lost"

- A young Chechnyan fighter Mussa Guysamo.

The Tiger's Leap On Mullaitivu

(What went wrong with the General's vision)

The massive Mullaitivu defeat suffered by the Sri Lankan military in late July, where over 1200 soldiers were killed by the Tamil Tiger forces in a conventional-type attack capturing the base with relative ease, could turn out to be the decisive turning point in the LTTE's 13-year war with the Sinhala-dominated government of Sri Lanka. Some Western journalists saw clearly its parallels to the Viet Cong guerrillas' Tet offensive in Vietnam; one even described it as the biggest military debacle any conventional army in South Asia had suffered in the post-independence era.

The curious point is that no one closely following the national conflict in Sri Lanka thought there was the slightest possibility that the LTTE could launch an attack of that magnitude so quickly after the government's military successes in Jaffna. The spectacular overpowering of the Mullaitivu garrison came as a total shock. All the pundits - that includes the Sri Lankan government, its military leaders, advisers to the Western states and most Western journalists - who seriously thought the back-bone of the LTTE had been broken after the dazzling success of Riviresa operations 1,2 and 3, were somewhat baffled.

The army commander, in a recent interview, assured that the LTTE could no longer carry out "Poonaryn-type" attacks (The Poonaryn attack was a ferocious rebel onslaught in October, '93 on a northern military base in which hundreds of soldiers were killed, albeit relatively smaller in comparison with the storming of the Mullaitvu base).

Also, Gen. Anurudda Ratwatta had announced the LTTE was effectively a spent force and that crushing whatever strength remained in the Vanni jungles and East was just a matter of time. The government tried to assure the outside world that its two-pronged - military/political - offensive was on track and that soon the Sinhala-dominated troops occupying some five per

cent of the Tamil homeland would be able to win the hearts and minds of the Tamil people living there and impress those still living in the LTTE-held territories as well.

The obvious but fascinating question is what could have made all these supposedly reasonable people so gullible and naive?

But before answering that let us briefly examine the model on which the government's anti-LTTE strategy was based.

The basic assumption running through the entire strategy is the belief that the majority of Tamil populace in the North are fed up of the LTTE and eagerly anticipating the military defeat of the LTTE, provided the government takes steps to "devolve certain powers" to "redress their grievances".

Hence the two-pronged strategy: on one hand, the military offensive to capture a significant portion of rebel-held territory and weaken the LTTE substantially so its activities could be reduced to minor hit-and- run attacks by a "dwindling fanatical group" in the periphery; and on the other hand, the political offensive to establish a government-administration backed by occupying troops which would be used as a base to impress the people living there through "reconstruction and rehabilitation".

It is important to note that the political aspect of the strategy was not to try and impress the LTTE. It was aimed at driving a wedge between the LTTE and the Tamil people. In other words, it was subordinate to, and part and parcel of the military aim to crush the LTTE. For, the military and the government firmly believed that the Prabhakaran-leadership would never agree to a settlement which would split the Tamil homeland and leave the Sinhala-dominated Centre intact, whereby the final say on the destiny of the Tamil homeland would remain at the mercy of the Sinhala-dominated government in Colombo. (Indeed, the LTTE's subsequent calls for a settlement involved substantial re-structuring of the Centre, in addition to devolution of power at the periphery).

So, the primary target of both the military and political offensives was to militarily defeat the LTTE. The government also knew that the bargaining strength of those Tamil political groups collaborating with them in Colombo was dependent on the survival of the LTTE. Once the LTTE was destroyed, imposing on the Tamil people an even more diluted version of the present political package would be no problem at all; and the government knows it. That probably explains why, encouraged by the relatively easy capture of the Jaffna peninsula and the highly bullish predictions of a quick victory, the government was reluctant to force the blatantly opportunistic UNP-Opposition to a parliamentary debate on the political package.

Let us now dwell on more general features of the government's strategy.

Unlike the previous military leadership, the new command (under the influence of deputy Defence Minister Gen. Anuruddha Ratwatta) planned to equip the forces with expensive new technology to launch a massive operation in the LTTE stronghold itself in the hope of dismantling the LTTE's de facto administration and installing a new military administration over a section of the Tamil people. This was expected to facilitate the conditions for marginalising the LTTE. Also, the government had high hopes of buying off Tamil people's loyalty by introducing some form of political package. This, it was thought, would pave the way for a Tamil administration with the help of the Tamil quisling groups in Colombo.

In the hope of putting this plan into practice the military launched its war effort on the 9th of July 1995. In order to test the water, the military started with the Operation Leap Forward and then proceeded with the major "broad front" offensive (Code named: operation Riviresa One) to take Jaffna, with tens of thousands of well-equipped troops, backed by indiscriminate shelling and bombing, steam-rolling their way into the Tiger stronghold.

However, one unexpected development crippled the military objective - the massive exodus of Tamil people in the face of the approaching army. This left an empty territory for the troops to occupy. Hundreds of thousands of people who fled either went to the Vanni district where the LTTE leadership had retreated or to other areas within Thenamarchchi district which was still under Tiger control. Without the people the government's "victory cry" sounded very hollow indeed.

Operation Riviresa 2 was launched primarily to redress this. The military proceeded by terrorising the hundreds of thousands of refugees who had settled in Thenamarachchi by indiscriminate aerial bombing while sealing off the only available exit to Vanni, and then surrounding a section of the refugee populace and "persuading" them to return to the homes they left in and around Jaffna (Valigamam).

By then the LTTE had learnt vital lessons from Operation Riviresa 1, and consequently chose not to confront the conventional forces head-on at that stage. The Tigers are reported to have encouraged people to return while advising them to be watchful of the Sinhala troops occupying Jaffna. On their part, the Tigers had made a tactical withdrawal mainly to the jungle terrain of Vanni while leaving pockets of guerrillas to continue hit-and-run attacks within the military-controlled areas.

Encouraged by the LTTE's non-confrontational stance the military immediately expanded its main target and hurriedly moved into strategic spots within the remaining parts of Jaffna peninsula too, thereby, overstretching its resources considerably.

After occupying about five per cent of the Tamil homeland around the Tamils' cultural centre (Jaffna) a military administration, mainly run by Sinhala soldiers, was set up in the hope of carrying out the political aspect of the two-pronged strategy, i.e. to try and win the loyalty of the Tamils through "reconstruction work" and displaying a political package which, the government claimed, had gone some way towards meeting the aspirations of the Tamil people. (In truth, the new proposals are designed to maintain Sinhala/ Buddhist supremacy at the Centre and split the territorial unity of Tamil homeland).

I suspect that the deceptively dazzling military victory in the North mesmerised the government into a false sense of self-confidence. The military and political leaders thought the total crushing of the LTTE was round the corner. Hence, a head-on confrontation with the vociferous Sinhala opposition in the South, by introducing even the diluted devolution-package in parliament, was avoided, because a total victory over the LTTE would make the political efforts to win the hearts and minds of Tamils (risking the support of the Sinhala electorate) not terribly urgent. So, the political package took a back seat.

In fact, the Tamil political parties in Colombo, who have been backing the government's war against the LTTE, ended up in an extremely awkward position when the government began to backslide on the political package, pushing even the wavering sections among the Tamil civilians in Colombo towards the LTTE. The leaders of EPDP, TELO, EROS etc., have begun to confess openly about the mistake they made by giving up arms and joining the political main-stream in the South. They appeared to feel betrayed by the Sinhala government, as if the government had been using them in a Machiavellian way to crush the Tamil struggle.

This development has gone a long way towards substantiating my earlier allegation that the Tigers were correct in thinking that the government was conducting the ill-fated peace process in bad faith and using it as a tactical episode in a military strategy to try and marginalise the LTTE from the Tamil people and eventually crush them.

By now, it has become abundantly clear that the government is no longer keen to implement the political package risking its popularity among the Sinhala electorate but is concentrating instead on the military aspect of the strategy to defeat the LTTE. The government "think-tank" mistakenly thought that dismantling the LTTE administration in Jaffna and replacing it with a military administration would serve as a solid basis for crushing the LTTE militarily.

From a purely military point of view the government had good reasons for optimism. To start with, the capturing of Jaffna, quite apart from giving a tremendous boost to the government's image locally and abroad, was seen by the military as a severe blow to LTTE morale (even though developments since have demonstrated that the occupation of Jaffna has in fact hardened the LTTE's resolve to face the challenge as never before).

Also, losing hundreds of thousands of people from LTTE-control had cut off a vital source of income for the rebels. The government never saw the LTTE's sudden retreat to Vanni as a tactical withdrawal which kept its leadership, cadres and weapons in tact. The government saw it as an act of desperation in the face of its own newly acquired military might.

Gen. Anuruddha Ratwatta, the deputy Defence Minister In charge of the overall war strategy, has been assuring President Kumaratunga that over 60 per cent of the LTTE strength has already been crushed and that it would take only five days for the army to flush the LTTE out from the eastern province. According to him, the LTTE guerrillas restricted to the Vanni jungles could then be easily crushed in a matter of six months. The important thing was to throttle the LTTE forces by cutting off funds and weaponry from abroad.

The Indian navy's collaboration with the Sri Lankan military to track and sink LTTE vessels bringing arms to Tiger territory was a major blessing for the Sinhala government's effort to crush the Tamil struggle. The Delhi government's and the Tamil Nadu administration's open hostility towards the LTTE had been crucial to the government's strategy. (Whether the Indian stance has been significantly altered since the major changes in India's political landscape after the recent general elections has yet to be seen).

The only remaining loophole in the military strategy, in the government's view, was the huge financial support the LTTE was getting from the Tamil Diaspora; hence the allocation of massive funds by the Sri Lankan government to launch an unprecedented propaganda campaign to undermine that link. The Foreign Minister with a Tamil name had to set out on a globe-trotting mission of shuttle-diplomacy to convince the governments of those countries where Tamil expatriates reside in significant numbers that the government was at the verge of defeating the LTTE totally only if the foreign states led by the US took decisive action to clamp down on LTTE activities in their countries so that the flow of funds to LTTE coffers can be drastically curtailed. The fact that those foreign political advisors in Colombo, who brief their relevant governments, had already swallowed the Sri Lankan government's interpretation of its military advancement, was of enormous use to the foreign minister, Kadirgamar, in carrying out his global mission.

In order to facilitate a suitable atmosphere for the foreign governments to carry out the crack down, it was important to brand the LTTE as a 'terrorist' organisation internationally, while hiding the extreme atrocities being committed against and the human sufferings being inflicted on the Tamil people as a direct result of the government's war effort. A costly disinformation campaign was launched internationally to achieve the former target, while a ban on journalists visiting the war theatre and harsh press censorship was imposed to achieve the latter. The "placing" of selected and doctored "news items" in the world press and manipulation of certain foreign journalists to publish highly biased "analyses" of the Tamil struggle reached such heights that blatantly unprofessional editorials to brand the LTTE as "a bunch of fanatical terrorists" began to appear even in prestigious newspapers like "The Times" in the UK. (This bears similar hallmarks to the now well-known global media manipulation preceding the Gulf War). Certain false stories presented at military press-briefings to demonise the LTTE were freely disseminated all over the world as "facts". (In fact, the LTTE leadership issued a strong statement protesting against this phenomenon in August 96.)

Lakshman Kadirgamar's efforts to get the international support to cover the remaining gap, i.e. the flow of funds from Tamil expatriates, seemed successful as the Canadian and Swiss governments moved to arrest the leaders of LTTE organisations in those two countries. The Tamil refugee population was highest in Canada and Switzerland and consequently the greatest financial backing for the LTTE also came from Tamils living in these two countries. Therefore, it might not have been accidental that the international effort to cut off the LTTE's financial life-line started there. In fact, it looked intriguingly as though there was a sort of international 'conspiracy' among the governments of Sri Lanka, Delhi and the rich countries to try and crush the leadership of the Tamil struggle.

Now let me summarise the main elements in the Sri Lankan government's military strategy:

a) To capture at least a substantial portion of the Jaffna peninsula, dismantle the LTTE's de facto government there, and in the process destroy a sizeable portion of the LTTE cadres and set up a military administration in the North.

b) To launch a similar operation in the East to force the remaining LTTE cadres there to the jungles in Vanni.

c) To launch another military operation from Elephant Pass, through Paranthan and Kilinochchi to secure a supply route linking the occupied territory in the North with the South.

d) To restrict the LTTE cadres to Vanni jungles and steadily strangle them by effectively cutting off their armaments and financial life-lines from abroad.

It is probably true that the government would have been delighted if it could get the political package, which splits the Tamil homeland and protects Sinhala domination at the Centre, approved in parliament. That certainly would have been extremely useful in misleading the international community during its war effort to demolish the Tamil struggle. But, it was the divisions within the Sinhala political establishment (for purely opportunistic reasons) which prevented that happening.

It is obvious that the UNP, realising that the very war-hysteria and chauvinism whipped up by the government is working against the package, has been trying its best to avoid any association with it as long as possible. The government too, sensing the opportunistic motives of the Opposition, has begun to backslide from the political package fearing unpopularity within the Sinhala electorate and instead is concentrating purely on the military aspect, about which it was (until Mullativu) becoming increasingly confident.

The Tamil political parties in Colombo, who were being discredited among the Tamil people by the hour, kept insisting on a North/East merger if they were to accept the package. The PA government, dominated by the ultra-chauvinist SLFP, would never have agreed to this, and hence it was obviously in President Kumaratunga's interest too to postpone a parliamentary debate on the package until she concluded the war, i.e., crushed the LTTE. For, she knew that once the LTTE was out of the picture the so-called moderate Tamil parties' preferences would be effectively irrelevant. (This is why I do not include the political package in my description of the military's equation summarised above).

In purely militaristic logic, the above mentioned strategy may sound solid. But then how was the LTTE able to launch its biggest ever attack on the Mullaitivu base, jeopardising all government calculations, just a short while after its biggest defeat.

The simple answer, I think, is the spiritual depth of national liberation struggles. This is the crucial factor missing from the government's military equation. Conventional military analysts tend to limit their enquiries to more tangible factors such as the unique logistical vulnerability of the Mullaitivu camp over-looked by the military leaders, the guerrilla-friendly jungle terrain in Mullaitivu as opposed to the open Jaffna-terrain favourable to conventional forces, the post-victorious complacency of the government troops etc., etc. Although it is true that such factors did play a significantly contributory role in making the Mullaitivu attack a dazzling success for the Tigers, they fail to explain the unique immensity of the accomplishment so soon after a demoralising retreat. (I deliberately used the term "retreat" instead of "defeat" to highlight the fact that the government troops' occupation of the Jaffna peninsula did not involve a great victory for the military in a physical sense, but, it merely forced the LTTE forces to make a tactical withdrawal keeping its cadres, weaponry and the leadership intact). Arguably, the most plausible way to explain such inimitable achievements is to acknowledge the incomparable resolve and commitment of national liberation fighters to sacrifice their lives for a deeply felt cause. (The heroism of the LTTE forces can usefully be compared with the large scale desertions presently taking place within the Sri Lankan army). Military analysts' failure to differentiate guerrilla forces fighting national liberation struggles from guerrilla groups in general is extremely misleading indeed. It would be strategically and politically prudent to understand that there is a world of difference between guerrillas fighting a national liberation struggle from their home-ground against an alien army and guerrillas fighting, for example, a civil war to overthrow a government from within.

Liberation fighters throughout the world have routinely turned defeats into bigger victories. Defeat only strengthens their resolve to rise again. Whatever the obstacles conventional military strategists pose they will always find ways of overcoming them. There will be no shortage of cadres to continue the struggle as long as the relevant nation exists. As history has shown, all national liberation struggles have either ended up victoriously for the liberationists or else dragged on inconclusively causing economic ruin and political chaos to the countries concerned. There can be no military solutions to such struggles; only political solutions. Hi-tech war efforts can only delay the final outcome, i.e. the victory of the liberation fighters. Unless of course the adversary is capable of wiping out the entire nation.

In Sri Lanka there are some who would be quite happy to consider that last option. But judging from the level of military and political maturity the Tamil struggle and its leadership have reached, and judging from the rapidity with which national consciousness has strengthened among the Tamil people, and judging from the economic and political vulnerability Sri Lanka has reached as a direct result of the war, and judging from the deepening divisions within the Sinhala political establishment, any attempts in that direction could only accelerate the already gathering momentum which is plunging Sri Lanka towards an economic and political Black Hole.

Gen. Anurudda Ratwatta's attempts to underplay the significance of the Mullaitivu catastrophe by saying "In every military campaign, some battles are lost and others won" (Daily News, 8 Aug. 1996) could prove to be a fatal mistake for the government; for, more than anything else, it demonstrated the unique potential of national liberation struggles as opposed to conventional warfare.

Perhaps it is not accidental that Gen. Ratwatta, in his statement on the Mullaitivu debacle to the parliament, has chosen not to dwell upon the possible reasons for the shocking magnitude of the Mullaitivu attack which has ridiculed all his insights into LTTE's post-Riviresa vulnerability. Instead he chose to limit his analysis to provide possible reasons as to why the LTTE launched this attack. According to Ratwatta, Mullaitivu attack was "a last ditch attempt to recover their lost prestige, and thereby (to boost up) their sources of income", and also "to prevent the troops from marching (from Elephant Pass) towards the South of the mainland".

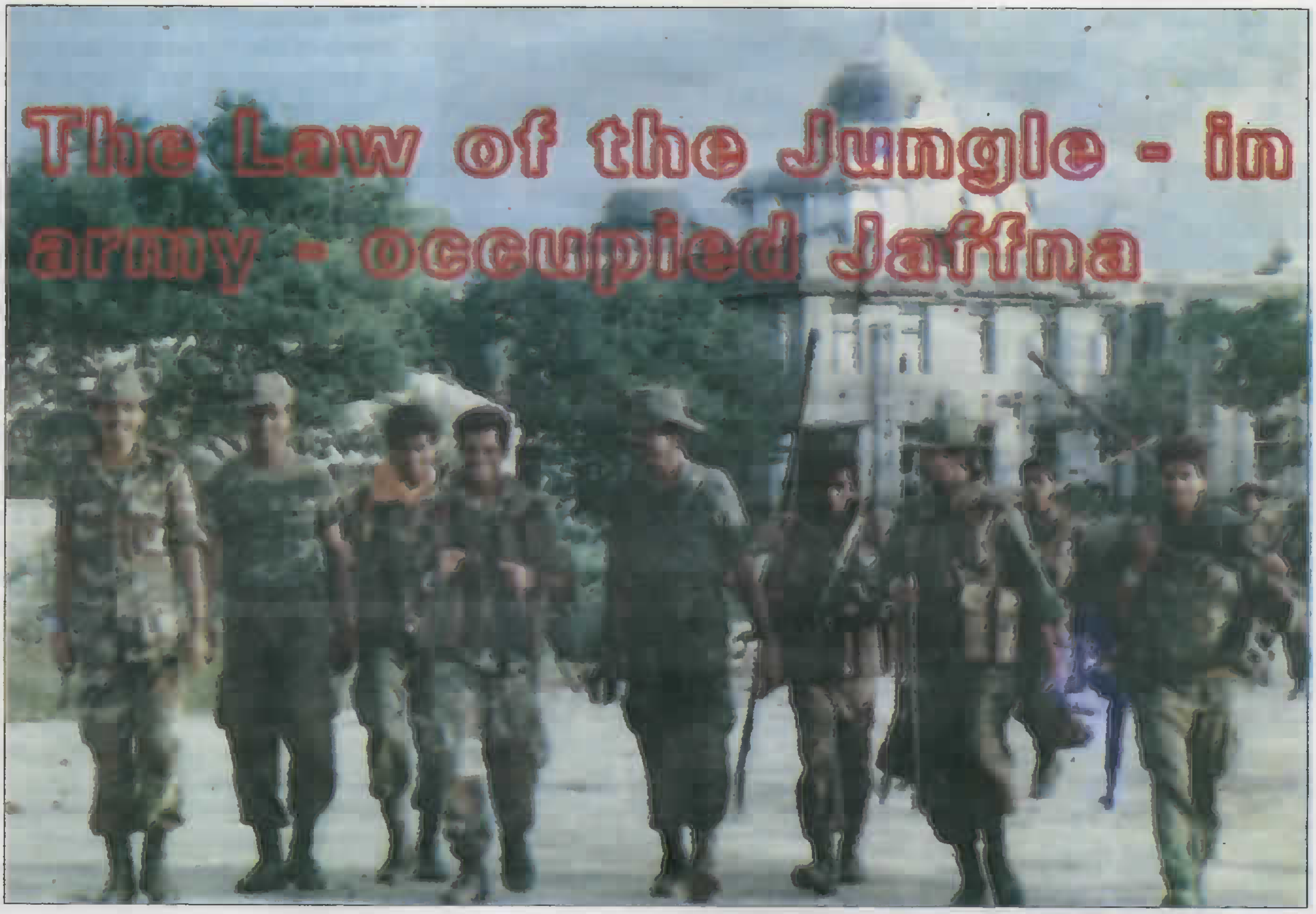
A more honest attempt to find out what went wrong with his military vision would have been an eye-opener for many Sinhala chauvinists to see that it would be in the interest of the Sinhala South to find some formula to stop the war as soon as possible, withdraw the Sinhala troops from the Tamil homeland, and re-start negotiations with the LTTE with a genuine view to achieve peace with justice.

Vasantha Raja

12, Aug. 1996

London

The Law of the Jungle - in army - occupied Jaffna



Under the cover of press censorship and the ban on foreign journalists, the Sri Lankan armed forces are engaged in large scale human rights violations in the occupied areas of the Tamil homeland. Extra-judicial killings, rapes, arrests, tortures and disappearances are rapidly increasing in the Jaffna peninsula.

Life in the occupied Jaffna peninsula is becoming a nightmare. Hundreds of young people are arrested in cordon and search operations with the assistance of army hired persons wearing masks. When the parents make enquiries in the army camps, the army officers deny that arrests have been made. On average, 4 to 5 young students are disappearing every day. In the second week of August in the Maravanpulavu and Thanankillapu area of the Thenmaratchi division a similar operation was carried out and 2 women and 2 men were arrested. Their whereabouts are not known. The two men arrested are brothers and their disappearance has caused severe distress to the family. A shop belonging to Mr. M. Sivalingam was looted and two bicycles were destroyed by the Sri Lankan soldiers during the same operation.

Another horror story in occupied Jaffna is the late night search operation during which young women are abducted by the Sri Lankan soldiers and raped. Many women who were taken to army camps for questioning never returned. Some of them were released after being subjected to severe sexual assaults. On 9th of August at about 11 pm 2 Sri Lankan soldiers tried to abduct a Tamil woman in the Kachchai area of Thenmaratchi division. Unexpectedly they were attacked by the Tamil woman using a kitchen knife. One soldier died on the spot and the other was seriously wounded. The next day the armed forces rounded up the area and arrested many young boys and girls in retaliation. As normal, most of them will disappear in army custody.

On 3rd of August Sri Lankan armed forces entered a house in Kerudavil, Thenmaratchi and approached a Tamil woman. When her father intervened he was hacked to death by the soldiers. Then the soldiers gang raped the daughter. The victim whose name is Ms Karthikesu Parameswary was later hacked to death.

Military atrocities in Jaffna; A young girl raped and murdered

Sri Lankan military atrocities in the occupied areas of Jaffna peninsula are rapidly increasing. In Kalvayal area of Thenmaratchi division a group of Sri Lankan soldiers entered a house in midnight and gang raped a young girl. The girl's father was hacked to death by the same soldiers. The girl later succumbed to the extensive injuries.

A 55 year old man from Thanankilappu area of Thenmaratchi division was arrested by the Sri Lankan armed forces on 2nd of August for no apparent reason. He was severely tortured while being detained and sustained severe injuries in liver. The old man who wishes to remain anonymous has now been admitted to hospital for treatment.

Armed members of a Tamil quisling group EPDP are harassing the people of Maravanpulavu-Thanankillappu areas with assaults, abductions and robberies. The Sri Lankan army which was staying in this area and terrorising the people have now withdrawn but armed members of EPDP group have moved in. A Palmyrah Board employee have been abducted by two bearded members of the EPDP who came in a white van. He has not been released yet.

8 bodies in a shallow grave

The bodies of 3 young girls and 5 young men were discovered all bundled together in a shallow grave hidden under a bush in Thenmaratchi. Local residents said that it was the work of the Sri Lankan armed forces.

Arrests and forced labour

On the 4th of August, in two separate roundups the Sri Lankan armed forces arrested 9 people in Kachchai and 2 others in Thanankilappu. When the distressed relatives made enquires from the nearby Thenmaratchi army camp, the officers denied making any such arrests.

The occupying Sri Lankan armed forces are subjecting the Tamil people to forced labour in Jaffna peninsula. People are forced to work for the armed forces free of charge. Lorry-drivers and Tractor drivers are ordered to carry loose earth and sand for the fortification of army camps without any payment.

Youths beaten to death

On the 30th of July, two Tamil youths from Manthuvil and Thunnalai taken for questioning, were beaten with iron rods and tortured to death by the Sri Lankan army in Jaffna. The army had secretly buried the bodies. However the local people were able to locate the bodies and identified one as Sivalingam of Manthuvil and the other still remains unidentified.

2 civilians shot dead

Two Tamil civilians were shot dead by Sri Lankan soldiers at Ponnalai on the 15th of this month. Krishnapillai Thavarasa aged 25 the father of two children and Ponnaiah Srivalli aged 26 are the victims. Ponnaiah Karunathan aged 30 who is the brother of one of the victims Srivalli, was wounded in the shooting.

Girls are harassed

In a machiavellian move to break Tamil people's resistance to Sri Lankan army occupation of Jaffna peninsula the Sri Lankan soldiers stationed in the peninsula are harassing young Tamil girls with offers of marriage. Female Sri Lankan soldiers are also pursuing young Tamil boys with offers of marriage. An army official has confided unofficially that they have plans of making 10,000 such links.

Exams held in empty halls

The Jaffna University within the Sri Lankan army occupied area, with its Vice-Chancellor as a virtual prisoner of the armed forces, is holding its annual examinations now. Most of the candidates are not in Jaffna peninsula. They fled to Vanni Tamil mainland during the Sri Lankan military offensive and have no intention returning to Jaffna under military rule. Colombo authorities insisted on holding the examinations for their propaganda purposes and ended up holding examinations in empty halls without any candidates present.

Youth shot dead on the road

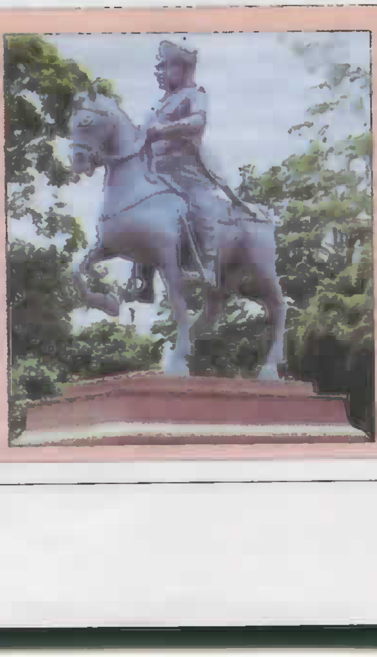
A Tamil youth who was walking on the roadside was shot and killed by the passing Sri Lankan soldiers. This incident happened in Chavakachcheri on the 18th of August. The victim was a sales assistant in a grocery shop and his earnings are the only income for his poor family.

School girls shot dead and wounded

Sri Lankan troops have shot dead and wounded many Tamil school girls on August 19, during a cordon and search operation on Kokuvil East a

Army desecrates statue of last Tamil King

The Sri Lankan armed forces who occupied the Jaffna peninsula, have knocked down the statue of Sankiliyan, the last king of Jaffna. Sankiliyan, the last king of Jaffna, who was unseated by the Portuguese is fondly remembered by the people who visit his statue at Nallur where he had his seat of Government. The beautiful statue of the king on a horseback with a sword in one hand was erected by the Tamil people as a homage for the king they all loved.



thickly populated residential area bordering Jaffna town. Details of victims are not available at the moment and is difficult to assess as it is an army occupied area. In the search operation that was carried out on Monday, around 600 Tamils including 250 women have been taken away by the armed forces. The army has refused to give any information on those taken away.

Freedom of movement curtailed

The Sri Lankan armed forces have severely restricted the freedom of movement of the Tamil people who live in the Jaffna peninsula. The movement of people from one village to another is controlled by means of army checkposts and passes issued by the military. Any resident who intends to travel out of his village will have to justify his reason for travel to the local military official before a permission is granted. The permission, if given, will stipulate a time for return to the village.

The people living within the Jaffna Municipal town limits are still more seriously restricted and watched. The town residents are not easily permitted to travel beyond Navatkuli army barrier or Thattatheru junction. Recently, a town dweller was given only one hour time to return from a funeral held outside the Jaffna Town.

Large-scale disappearances

Incidents of mass arrest of Tamil youths by the occupying Sri Lankan armed forces are taking place regularly in the Jaffna peninsula. The list of missing persons is on the increase. Those who campaign about disappearances are harassed and intimidated by the Sri Lankan military. Tamil civilian authorities are maintaining silence because of fear of reprisal.

In Thenmaratchi many young boys and girls were arrested recently by the army in Thanankilapu-Maravanpulavu coastal belt area. Many youths were arrested in Kaithady area in the interior section of Thenmaratchi. All these youths are still in army custody. In many instances when enquiries were made by the parents and relatives the Sri Lankan army officials deny such arrests. Mr. Sellathurai Sivarasa, 27, was taken away by the Sri Lankan military from his home in Kaithady 2 months ago and has not been released yet. His family members made enquiries in the local Sri Lankan military office. They were told by army officials that no such arrest was made.

On the 4th of July 2 young girls were arrested by the army in Maravanpulavu area. On the 3rd of July 5 young boys were taken away in the same area. All the 7 are still missing. The scale of disappearances in Jaffna peninsula is much higher. Many details of disappearances are not available at the moment because collecting such data within the army occupied area is a herculean task.

The military administration has imposed rigid restrictions over the movement of population in Jaffna peninsula. The municipal area of the Jaffna city is practically cut off from the rest of the peninsula. Having divided the peninsula into 3 security zones (Valigamam, Vadamaratchi and Thenmaratchi) a pass system is in operation with the sole purpose of restricting the freedom of movement of the civilian population.

With the ban on all the foreign journalists to Jaffna peninsula, apart from those military guided tours, the Sri Lankan military is executing a ruthless terror campaign inside Jaffna peninsula. The international human rights organisations are also banned by the Sri Lankan government from witnessing these gross violations of human rights within the occupied Jaffna peninsula.

Sexual advance and murder

A group of Sri Lankan soldiers have killed a young Tamil girl in Jaffna peninsula when she resisted their sexual advances. The group of Sri Lankan soldiers in the night had entered the house of an 18 year old school going Tamil girl and made sexual advances to her. When she resisted their advances, they violently attacked her and killed her. This happened on the 15th of August, in the village of Madduvil in Thenmaratchi.

Sinister campaign in Tamil Nadu

In a statement issued on 5 September, the LTTE says:

"We are deeply distressed to note that a calculated sinister misinformation campaign has been launched against the LTTE in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, by the Sri Lankan intelligence in connivance with local agents with the sole motive of tarnishing the image of our liberation organisation. We are also saddened by the fact that some sections of the Indian media tend to highlight the stories conjured up and fabricated by Sri Lanka agents without verifying the authenticity of the source.

"There have been reports in the Indian media that the LTTE was involved in an attempt to bomb the TV tower in Rameswaram and threatened to bomb a train in Trichy. We wish to state categorically that the LTTE is not involved in any way in these alleged attempts. These stories are deliberately invented to discredit our organisation and to confuse the people in Tamil Nadu.

"In view of the deliberate disinformation campaign being carried out against the LTTE by the agents of Sri Lanka, we wish to appeal to the Indian media to be discreet in disseminating such news stories."

Arrests and disappearance

Krishnamoorthy Thavanesan, 22, a university student doing a degree in Mathematics, Thirunavukarasu, 19, a GCE O/L student and Thunavukarasu Suthakaran, 23, were arrested by Sri Lankan armed forces in Thanankilapu area of Thenmaratchi. The army has denied their arrest when members of Suthakaran's family enquired at the nearest Sri Lankan military camp.

Retired teacher dies of shock

Mr. K. Sivakolunthu, 64, a retired teacher from Mirusuvil died of shock after hearing Machine gun fire from the nearby Sri Lankan army camp. He was living with his relatives in Pallai in Jaffna peninsula which is occupied by the Sri Lankan armed forces.

Pregnant woman under arrest

Ms. Yogi Sukanthini, 22, living in David road, Gurunagar in Jaffna Town was arrested by the Sri Lankan armed forces. She was taken from her home at 10 pm on the 21st of August and have not been released yet. No reasons were given for her detention. She was 4 months pregnant at the time of her arrest.

Leprosy patient commits suicide

Mr. Ponniah Vigneswaran who was a Leprosy patient committed suicide recently within Sri Lankan army occupied Jaffna peninsula. Due to the poor medical facilities in the occupied zone he was not able to obtain any treatment in Jaffna. No arrangements were made to send him to the special hospitals in Colombo or Batticaloa. Out of sheer desperation Mr. Ponniah Vigneswaran took his own life. He was working as a Grama Sevaka (Village officer) within the Pallai Assistant agent division in Jaffna peninsula.

Soldiers on sex & murder spree

The body of a young Tamil woman has been lying in the Jaffna hospital mortuary for one month. She had been gang raped by the Sri Lankan soldiers and then killed.

On the 1st of August, in Manthuvil, Thenmaratchi, a young daughter, her mother and the mother's younger sister were all raped by the Sri Lankan soldiers who entered their house. A male member of the family who tried to prevent the rape was severely attacked by the soldiers. All three females are now receiving treatment in the Manthikai hospital. Soldiers who had gone to the hospital has told the women to lodge a complain that Tamil Tigers did the dirty work.

During the first week of August, in Point Pedro old town, a father who tried to rescue his daughter from a group of Sri Lankan soldiers who were molesting her, was shot dead by the soldiers.

Raiding at night of homes where young women live is usually undertaken by the Sri Lankan soldiers with desires of a carnal nature. During round-up and search operations, women specially younger women are stripped naked by male Sri Lankan soldiers under the pretext of searching for hidden arms. In late evening searches, women are arrested and kept overnight in Army camps and released the following morning.

Hindu temple stripped

The historic Muthu Vinayakar Ganesh temple in Vadamaratchi has been totally stripped by the Sri Lankan army for erecting sentry points and barricades. The temple is now completely ruined. The armed forces are also removing roofs and doors from houses in the area to build army camps.

Ban on medical services

Sri Lankan soldiers camped next to the Valvettiturai Government hospital are ordering the hospital staff to go back home after they sign the attendance register. The hospital does not function any more. The nearby Manthikai hospital is not permitted by the armed forces to function fully. The hospital now treats mostly old women

LTTE AGREES TO OBSERVE PEACE FOR 4 DAYS

The LTTE leadership has agreed to observe peace for 4 days in September and October this year to facilitate the immunisation campaign by the UNICEF to eradicate Polio among children.

In a reply to the request made by Brita Ostberg, UNICEF representative in Colombo, Mr. V. Prabakaran, leader of the LTTE has agreed to declare 6th and 7th of September and 11th and 12th of October 1996 as days of tranquillity to facilitate the implementation of the immunisation programme.

"I wish to assure you that the LTTE will extend its full co-operation to your endeavour to promote the well-being of the children. I hope that the government of Sri Lanka will also respond positively to your request for peace during these specified days", states Mr. Prabakaran in his letter dated 28th August 1996.

Brita Ostberg, UNICEF representative, has written to the LTTE leader and the government of Sri Lanka to declare peace during the stated days for the sake of children to carry out the immunisation campaign.

Last year, the LTTE responded favourably to a similar request made by the UNICEF to carry out Polio immunisation programme.

and women admitted by the Sri Lankan soldiers. The male patients have been driven away.

Fishermen tortured and killed

It has now been found out that many Tamil fishermen who were arrested at Araly sea, Jaffna by the Sri Lankan Navy on the 27th of July have been brutally tortured and killed.

After learning about the arrests the relatives of the Tamil fishermen approached a local Sri Lankan army camp and pleaded for their release. The Sri Lankan army chose to remain silent through out. But yesterday (29-08-96), the mutilated bodies of the fishermen were found washed ashore off Araly sea in highly decomposed state. The bodies had knife cuts, burn marks, stabbing injuries and gun shot wounds.

5 of the bodies have been identified. All the fishermen were from Savatkadu, Valigamam in the army occupied Jaffna peninsula.

Sri Lankan Military disinformation campaign

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a statement issued from its headquarters on 19th August has said that the Sri Lankan Military Intelligence in Colombo is actively pursuing a policy of feeding fabricated malicious news stories to correspondents of International News agencies and to the Colombo press as part of its war strategy to discredit and tarnish the image of the LTTE with whom the Sri Lankan Government is engaged in a war.

The statement said that certain Colombo correspondents of International News agencies are also implicated in the military disinformation campaign either wittingly or unwittingly, when they wire the untrue malicious stories internationally blowing it out of proportion and very often timing them to distract from developing stories which could incriminate and damage the image of the Government of Sri Lanka in the pursuit of its military aggression on the Tamil people living in the Tamil territory.

The statement said that there is no truth about the Sri Lankan claims that the LTTE is hijacking food lorries. It is a malicious lie which has been fabricated by the military authorities. The Sri Lankan Government authorities are deliberately creating these stories not only to tarnish the image of the LTTE locally and internationally but also to delay and block the food traffic to starve the Tamil population and to force them to go to army controlled area of Vavuniya, the statement said.

The Sri Lankan Military authorities released a false story that two LTTE boys carried a bomb in a bicycle with a motive to kill the Muslim minister for Port and Shipping M. H. Ashraff is also not true. The story was invented with the sinister motive of instigating communal violence between Tamils and Muslims in the East, the statement said.

The alleged bomb attack on South Korean Telecom Facility in Trincomalee by two members of the LTTE was also not true. The story is the work of Sri Lankan military intelligence to gain sympathy and assistance from South Korea to where the Sri Lankan president was making a visit to solicit funds from the South Korean Government for her war efforts.

Refugees talk of Jaffna atrocities

Refugees who fled to Vanni after Sri Lankan armed forces occupied Jaffna peninsula in the early part of this year have spoken of widespread military roundups, arbitrary arrests, torture and disappearances.

Forty one year old Rajaratnam Vanniyasingam who fled to Vanni at the end of July with his wife and 5 children said that the Sri Lankan army rounded up the villages of Maravanpulavu, Kokilakandy and Thanankilappu in Thenmaratchi on July 19 at about 8.30 AM. The soldiers said their military superior wanted to talk to us. We were herded into groups and then distributed between 5 different collection centres one of which being a place of worship, the Valliammai Hindu Temple. About 4,000 people were rounded up that day.

The army brought in six 'thalaiyattees' (masked men who nod their heads) who are supposed to identify LTTE sympathisers or supporters by nodding their heads. Thalaiyatees could be members of Tamil quisling groups like PLOTE, EPDP, TELO and EPRLF who work for the armed forces or arrested civilians forced by the army to wear masks and identify people. .

200 women and men were arrested on 'thalaiyattees' nodding of head. The armed forces then arrested all the young women and young men. They were assaulted and many of the youth were badly wounded when they were taken away by the army.

In custody, the arrested women and men were kept blind folded with their hands tied. They were beaten up. They were screaming in pain. Only 25 of the arrested were released, Mr Vanniyasingam concluded.

Thirty four year old Tharmaraja Selvaranee who fled with her 5 children and husband to Vanni on July 23 said the Sri Lankan army rounded up the villages of Thachchan Thopu and Navatkuli in Thenmaratchi on July 22. The army brought in 'Thalayatees' and arrested lots of people. We were all blind folded and our legs and hands were tied. If the 'Thalayatee' did not nod his head enough, he was beaten up and forced to nod his head so that more arrests could be made.

On that day she said the armed forces got hold of two fishermen who were going out to sea, and put them in

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front of us. They tied the fishermen's legs and hands. Their clothes were removed and they were made to stand naked in front of all the women. The army then beat them up heavily. Blood started pouring from the mouth of the fishermen.

She said in another incident the Armed forces assaulted Karmatchy a 45 year old woman because they thought she was an LTTE sympathiser. They broke her hands and she was bleeding from the head. Her skull must have been broken.

Twenty year old Miss Ganeshalingam Puspalatha who fled alone to Vanni on July 23 said her father and mother refused to leave Jaffna peninsula without my brother who has been arrested by the army. "My parents asked me to go Vanni so that at least one of their offspring could survive without falling into the hands of the army. She said the Army rounded up the village of Maravanpulavu in Thenmaratchi on July 22. The army brought in 'Thalayatees' and arrested many people and my brother Kirupaharan too was arrested. He sat for the GCE (O) level exams and was awaiting results.

"My mother, father and myself went to the army camp and pleaded with the authorities to release my brother. The soldiers assaulted my father. He fell to the ground. They were punching him. My mother was getting worried and she pleaded with the soldiers not to harm her husband. At that instant the soldiers pulled my mother by her saree and hit her. The soldiers threw me to the ground by grabbing my blouse. We returned home without learning anything about my brother."

No medicine, child dies

Rosintha Selvarajah a 4 year old child died in Jaffna teaching hospital without medicine. The hospital doctors prescribed 'posoptin' injection which was not available in the hospital medical store or in any medical shops in the town.

The Jaffna teaching hospital suffered from lack of medicine after military authorities curtailed the medical supply for years. Common medical items like Pentolin, Priton, Indosil, Brufon, Valium, Vitamin B etc. are not in stock even after the much published Sri Lankan government's rehabilitation programme of Jaffna peninsula.

Restrictions on Hindu worship

The Sri Lankan army which occupies the Jaffna peninsula has imposed a ban on people under the age of 45 from going to the historic Vishnu temple of Vallipuram in Vadamaratchchi. According to this new army rule all the worshippers over the age of 45 should get a pass from the army before going to the temple. Each worshippers are allowed to stay in the temple premises for a certain amount of time only and any one who stay over the time limit are detained by the army.

Religious shrines and religious activities are often the target of the Sinhala Buddhist army stationed in Jaffna peninsula. A few days ago the Sri Lankan army demolished the historic Mutha Vinayagar temple in Vadamaratchchi and the remains of the temple were used to construct military fortifications.

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Economic strangulation by Sri Lankan government

The Sri Lankan government has deliberately blocked 93% of food to Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts in the northern Vanni area where more than 200,000 Tamil refugees are starving while living along road sides and in jungles.

The government agent of Kilinochchi district reports that he presented a report to the Government stating that 4,000 Metric tonnes of food is urgently needed to satisfy the present requirements of the people living in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. He is appalled to find that the Sri Lankan government authorities in Colombo has slashed the amount by 93% and gave permission for only 290 Metric tonnes of food to pass through the army barrier at Thandikulam in Vavuniya.

This means the co-operative societies in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts in the northern Vanni area will not be allowed by the military to transport more than 290 Metric tonnes of food across the Thandikulam barrier. The co-operative societies in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts buy food from the shops in army occupied Vavuniya town and then take them across the army barrier at Thandikulam in lorries to their districts where they are sold to the people through their retail sales outlets.

The Sri Lankan government has been limiting food and medical supplies to the people living in the northern Vanni area for the last 6 years by not permitting food and medical supplies to pass through the army barrier at Thandikulam.

The northern Vanni area is under LTTE control. The Sri Lankan government is punishing the people who have chosen to live in areas liberated by the LTTE. The Government, in 1990, declared an economic embargo suspending food and medicine to Vanni areas where 500,000 to 600,000 people are now living.

There is very little or no food in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts in Vanni where there are more than 200,000 Tamil refugees who have fled to the jungles after the Sri Lankan armed forces launched a military offensive on Kilinochchi in July 1996. The refugees are starving while living along roadsides and in jungles. There is no medicine in the districts. People are dying due to lack of medical treatment. Many people are suffering from malnutrition.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vanni refugees disappear

Three refugees living in Vanni who went back to Army occupied Thenmaratchi to bring their aged relatives and collect their household goods have disappeared. Nallaiah Santhirasegaram, 29, father of 5 children, Thuraisamy Navaneethan, 30, and Vaithilingam Manoharan, 18, had made the difficult Kilali lagoon crossing and reached the Sri Lankan army controlled Thenmaratchi where they have disappeared. They left Vanni more than a month ago on July 03.

NGOs and relief activities

All international NGOs have left the Kilinochchi district. However FORUT that already had their functioning in rural area of Skandapuram is active within their available means and resources.

Severe shortage of medicines

There is a severe shortage of medicine and drugs developing in Mallavi hospital where large number of patients are being treated. After the bombing and destruction of Kilinochchi hospital by the Sri Lankan armed forces, the Mallavi and Akkarayan rural hospitals became important centres for treatment of Tamil patients.

The facilities in these small hospitals are totally inadequate. Adding to the misery is the shortage of medicine due to the Sri Lankan government embargo on medical items. 800 to 900 patients visit the Mallavi hospital daily and all 200 beds in the hospital had been taken up by patients at the moment. As a result of this many seriously ill patients are sent home without admission.

The doctors and medical staff who are working in Mallavi hospital are themselves rendered refugees after the current Sri Lankan military offensive on Kilinochchi. The hospital staff are themselves in need of food, shelter and water.

Colombo arrests continue

Arrests and detention of Tamil youths without trial by the Sri Lankan armed forces are continuing in Colombo in a large scale. On the 14th of August, 25 Tamils were arbitrarily arrested in Wolfendal street in Colombo. 10 of them were women. They are now being kept in detention without any trial.

Meanwhile long term Tamil detainees who have been kept in Colombo Magazine prison started a hunger strike until death demanding that they be tried in a court of law or be released.

Residents discover abandoned arms

Mullaitivu residents who returned to their homes after many years are beginning to find arms abandoned by the Sri Lankan armed forces during the fall of the Mullaitivu Sri Lankan army base. The residents are handing over the arms to the nearest LTTE offices. Many residents have found Sri Lankan army weapons in the wells in their homes. The Sri Lankan soldiers must have tossed their weapons into the wells when they fled their base.

Mullaitivu Town is beginning to flourish again after the fall of the army base. Tamil people are going back to live in their homes in Mullaitivu Town and suburbs after the fall of the Mullaitivu army base. The army base was overrun by the LTTE in July 1996. The Sri Lankan armed forces had taken over the Mullaitivu Town and its suburbs many years ago for its army base.

Massive round up of Pesalai

On Wednesday, August 21, Pesalai area in Mannar district came under a massive Sri Lankan army cordon and search operation. It is from Pesalai, large numbers of Tamil refugees are now fleeing to India, to escape from Sri Lankan army repression.

The whole area was cordoned off at dawn at about 6 AM and the search went on till late in the afternoon. All schools in Pesalai were ordered to be closed. The residents were ordered to assemble at the Fatima Madya Maha Vidyalam (school) playground. Once in the playground, all residents were sorted into groups according to sex and age. Every individual was thoroughly interrogated by an army team. At the end, the army took 3 residents away.

Situation in Batticaloa

A father of 6 children was killed in Sithandy as a result of Sri Lankan army shelling. M. Sellathurai, 42, a farmer who was tilling his plot of land was struck by artillery shells that were fired from the far off Batticaloa army camp. The farmer died on the spot.

The Batticaloa university is suffering without any power supply as a Sri Lankan army shell fired on the university has destroyed the University's Power transformer. The Army Brigadier administering Batticaloa has refused permission for the repairs to be carried out. The university students have been forced to use paraffin lamps in their lecture rooms.

Around 250 Tamil women from Alaiady Vembu who were widowed in the 1990 Sri Lankan army massacre have complained that they have not received any relief. The women were widowed when the Sri Lankan army killed in one night around 250 Tamil men in Alaiady Vembu in 1990.

Army impounds plastic tents

The Sri Lankan army has impounded 2 lorry loads of plastic tents that was being taken for use by Tamil refugees. The army seized the 2 lorry loads at the Thandikulam barrier in Vavuniya. The military authorities say that the plastic tents which are all blue coloured cannot be seen from the air and only white coloured tents will be allowed to pass through the barrier. Everybody knows that Blue plastic tents are being widely used world over to provide shelter for refugees.

Visuvamadu bombed

Sri Lankan war plane bombed farming village of Visuvamadu.

On Friday, August 23, a Sri Lankan Puccara fighter plane flew over Visuvamadu and dropped bombs on the village of agricultural fields dotted with dwelling cottages. Though the deadly cargo fell in the middle of the residential sections nobody was hurt. Visuvamadu village is situated at the extreme edge of the spacious Mullaitivu district.

27 Policemen killed in Batti

On the 29th of August at about 6 am LTTE forces in Batticaloa district launched an attack on a police patrol close to their police station in Kudapokkuna village. 27 policemen were killed and about 13 others fled to the jungles carrying with them the injured. Large amounts of arms and ammunitions were seized by the LTTE forces. This area was once a Tamil village and Sri Lankan government brought here many Sinhala settlers after chasing out the Tamil inhabitants who lived there.

Sri Lankan army patrol attacked

An army patrol unit that was doing its rounds in Porawalai in Batticaloa district was attacked by the LTTE forces at about 8 AM on the 31st of August. Five soldiers died on the spot while the rest fled carrying their injured. Arms and ammunitions were seized. The LTTE forces did not suffer casualties.

Thousands face starvation

The situation in Kilinochchi was still very precarious after the July 26th Sri Lankan military offensive with thousands of displaced Tamil people facing starvation and suffering without medical attention as a result of the military authorities permitting not more than 50 co-operative society lorries carrying food to pass through the army barrier at Vavuniya for a day, following the Sri Lankan government's six-year long economic blockade on the Tamil region.

There is an acute shortage of Wheat flour in the district because the Military authorities permitted so far (between August 12 to August 16) only 21 co-operative society lorries carrying wheat flour to pass through the army barrier after the 3 week old total blockade. The Kilinochchi District Government agent's report said that the 21 lorry loads of flour have been distributed to the Multipurpose co-operative societies of Karacchi South - 800,000 KGs, Akkarayan - 50,000 KGs, Velanai and Kayts - 60,000 KGs and Karachchi North - 20,000 KGs from where they are sold to the public. The stock is not at all enough to meet the present urgent requirements of the people.

Diseases spreading

The majority of the 200,000 displaced people are still living along road sides and in jungles. Due to the shortages of drinking water and water for washing, diseases associated with the use of unclean water are on the increase among the people living in Vanni. Some light rain fell in the area but the displaced people living along road sides and in jungles unfortunately got wet and have become more prone to illness as a result.

No medicine

There are no medicines in the hospitals in the district or there is an acute shortage, as the military authorities at Vavuniya have blocked all medical supplies to Vanni over the last six years following the Sri Lankan government's Economic embargo on the Tamil homeland. Two children died of Septicaemia in **Mallavi hospital.** Anti Rabies Vaccines are not available. Cerebral form of Malaria and the normal Malaria are on the increase.

The functions of Kilinochchi Post office has been transferred to the Sub post office at Akkarayan from the 16th August, as it has been completely destroyed by the Sri Lankan army shelling and is still liable to be shelled.

The local Murikandy Development society is helping 600 of the families who fled to the Puthuvedduvan Jungles. The society is distributing rubber sheets, clothes, buckets and cooking utensils to the 600 displaced families.

The Pandikulam-Thunnukai Rehabilitation society which is a local society is providing 15 sealed latrines to the Yogapuram colony. The society is also providing first aid kits to the people of Mallavi and Yogapuram.

Mother of 5 dies in navy fire

On the 1st of September the Sri Lankan Navy gun boats bombarded the Vakarai coastal area deliberately targeting a fishing settlement. The bombing started at 8.30 am. In this deliberate act of violence against innocent civilians Ms. Palasingam Wallipillai, 30, was directly hit by a Navy shell and died on the spot. She was a mother of 5 children.

Deliberately terrorising and killing innocent Tamil civilians is the main war strategy of the Sri Lankan government in which more than 50,000 innocent Tamil civilians have been killed so far. Ms. Palasingam Wallipillai is the latest innocent victim of the Sri Lankan state terrorism.

Refugee Influx into India again?

Madras, August 14 (PTI) The Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, today said the Centre should at least express its 'unhappiness' if not 'condemn' the attacks on innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka by that country's army.

Making a statement in the state assembly, in response to a special call attention by members of various political parties, he said he tried to contact the prime minister, Mr. H. D. Deve Gowda, and external affairs minister, Mr. I. K. Gujral, over telephone yesterday and today on the attacks on Tamils in the island republic. The prime minister was not available in the capital yesterday. This morning, he could not get Mr. Gujral, he said.

He would definitely take up with the centre the issue of attacks on Tamils in Sri Lanka and the subsequent influx of refugees in Tamil Nadu.

He said so far 118 Sri Lankan Tamils had landed in the state from July 31.The refugees, suspected to have connections with militant groups, would be separated and accomodated in special camps after a complete investigation, he said.

Mr. Karunanidhi said the influx of refugees was likely to increase with the Sri Lankan army stepping up its operations in the Tamil areas of the island. The navy, coast guard, coastal security group of Tamil Nadu police had been alerted to maintain a vigil over the arrival of refugees, he said. His government was fully geared to meet the challenge posed by the influx of refugees. All the refugees would be taken care of, he said.

He had discussions with the West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyothi Basu, who was also facing the problem of refugee influx from Bhutan, and both had decided to take care of the refugees out of humanitarian considerations, Mr. Karunanidhi said.

He said four Sri Lankan Tamils from Mannar district of Sri Lanka landed at Arichamunai in Ramanathapuram district on July 21. They had paid 9,000 Sri Lankan rupees to the boat owners for bringing them to India and another seven, who arrived on August 6 had paid Rs 15,000 to the boat owners, he said.

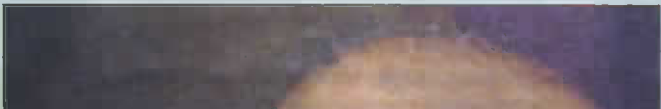
Mr. Karunanidhi said on 21 Sri Lankan Tamils landed at Rameswaram on Aug 8 and another 46 on Aug 13, besides 17 Tamils who came to the state on Aug 11. All boats that brought them, except one, had gone back to Sri Lanka, he said. One boat was seized by police, he added.

During investigation, the refugees told the police that more than 1,000 Tamil families were expected to arrive in India. The LTTE had advised them to flee Sri Lanka, Mr. Karunanidhi said.

Of the refugees who arrived, 11 had been kept at Melur and Chengalpattu special camps and another 59 had been kept at the Mandapam camp, he said.

He said over 56,000 Sri Lankan Tamils were staying in Tamil Nadu as refugees.

Earlier, Mr. C. Ganasekaran (TMC), Mr. S. Thirunavukkarassu, Mr. R. Tamarikani (both AIADMK), Mr. Theeren (PMK), Mr. K. Subbarayan (CPI) and Dr. M. Krishnasamy (Devendra Kula Vellar Sangam) urged the Chief Minister to take up the matter with the Centre. They also wanted the assembly to pass a resolution condemning the killings of Tamils by the Sri Lankan army.



Tamil groups fleeing to India?

New Delhi, Aug 14 (PTI) India today expressed concern at reported crossing over of **some groups affected by the situation in Sri Lanka** to this country during the last few days.

Every effort would be made to see that matters "settle down rapidly," an external affairs ministry spokesman said in a statement.

"We have received reports of some groups affected by the situation in Sri Lanka having come to India in the few days. We are concerned at this development and hope every effort will be made to see that matters settle down rapidly," he said.

OPEN LETTER TO MINISTER LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR

Dear Minister Kadirgamar,

I do not know if you are at all aware of the extent to which you are despised by the Tamil community in Sri Lanka and around the world.

But I presume you believe that the current role you are playing in the national conflict is a worthy one and you perhaps believe you are poised on the right side of history, defending something honourable and noble. At least, I hope this is how you see it, because otherwise it would imply you are merely trying to extract some other personal benefit by identifying yourself with the Sri Lankan state at this critical time.

I will give you the benefit of the doubt and suppose that you are acting out of what you, at least, see to be moral integrity. The way in which you talk to foreign media institutions certainly conveys that sense.

I think I can can guess where your moral outlook springs from. Your thought process is not too difficult to decipher because its roots can be traced not to the evolution of Tamil national consciousness in the North-East but to the curve of Sinhala political consciousness. You are largely a Tamil head superimposed on the end of that curve.

That is why you can be heard on the BBC World Service speaking with such conviction about the inconceivability of 'dividing the country', or the unthinkability of compromising the unitary state.

But let us look more closely at that conviction. Have you ever asked yourself why the unitary state is non-negotiable? I ask this in all sincerity because I have not, in all my mind-searching, been able to discover a single morally compelling reason.

This is why I am convinced it is nothing more than rhetoric disguised as moral conviction. If I am wrong about this, please articulate to the ignorant among us the high moral imperetive underlying the need to preserve the unitary state. If you are convinced there is a moral basis to your standpoint on the ethnic question, please elaborate. I imagine you might supply something like: `The LTTE is pursuing its political ambitions through violence and that is unacceptable in a democracy." But if that is your answer you need to think it through a bit better. In the 'democracy' you refer to, there has never existed the right of the Tamil nation to self-determination; therefore the existing system of 'democracy' excludes what should be a fundamental national right; therefore the resort to violence by the LTTE is not taking place within a democratic environment but in the absence of one, and for the purpose of establishing one.

I have tried hard to understand, Mr Kadirgamar, how you view the situation because, to be honest, you are a total enigma to me: I honestly cannot fathom what is spurring you on to partake in this monstrosity when there is no moral content whatever in your attachment to the unitary state or your opposition to a separate sovereign Tamil state.

On the other hand, there is a tremendous moral content in the argument that the Tamil nation on this island - a dignified and self-respecting nation which does not need anybody's verdict on whether it it is a 'real' nation - should be able to choose its own political future. Mr. Kadirgamar, the principle of self-determination is a universally recognised civilised principle which has a profound moral basis. So your empty conviction that 'We will never allow Sri Lanka to be divided' is crass to the point of being sickening.

To be sure, you have every right to speak on behalf of the Tamils living in the Sinhala homeland and to represent their interests. That is a worthy function and there is no doubt they could certainly do with your help at this critical time when they are being harassed beyond what many can bear.

Indeed, I even congratulate you on the fact that as a Tamil you have managed to attain a position of high standing within Sinhala society. But please do not use that position to crush the will of an indigenous Tamil nation (of which you do not consider yourself a part) to be free from the brutal historical legacy of rule by the Sinhala nation. This would amount to a strategy of 'pursuing your career ambitions' at the expense of the whole Tamil nation! (You do not find many instances in modern history where an obscenity of that magnitude has occurred!) The fact that you are in origin a Tamil is irrelevant- the role you are playing is treacherous. There would be nothing obscene if you were merely using your power to help develop the Sinhala nation towards prosperity. That would be noble. But there is absolutely no moral justification whatever in helping to crush the Tamil struggle for independence from Sri Lanka.

Lakshman Kadirgamar

Can it be that you have not studied the history of the island enough to know that the LTTE is not the original aggressor but the historical reaction to oppression by the state? The fact that many of the LTTE's activities are not palatable to us should not avert us from the fact that there is a profound historical process unfolding: the Sri Lankan state, having tried every means available so far to crush the Tamil will for independence, is merely involved in the latest stage in this historical task.

Earlier, when the will for independence was expressed by Tamils electorally (1977) it was denounced and rejected outright by the Sinhala establishment. So, without a hope in hell of Tamils achieving their national will electorally, militant groups predictably sprang up. The LTTE is only the latest expression of this will. If anything, their actions are an indictment against the increasingly hostile measures taken by successive Sri Lankan governments to prevent the increasing commitment to independence (which is, after all, a perfectly legitimate democratic aspiration).

one thing I want to add. There is one attribute which makes your current stance, Mr Kadirgamar, even less forgivable than that of your parliamentary colleagues in the EPDP, PLOTE, TULF. They, at least, pay lip-service to Tamils' right to be liberated. They at least perceive something of the historical injustice of the once separate Tamil nation being 'forced' to assimilate into and merge with the Sinhala nation (although these parties believe one might say naively- that a Sinhala-dominated government will one day 'grant' liberation out of sheer benevolence. That is where they differ from the LTTE, in that the LTTE has become convinced - justifiably so - that such a right would never be 'granted' out of benevolence).

You, Mr Kadirgamar, on the other hand, have not made any such recognition of the democratic legitimacy of the LTTE's demands. Does this mean that you are of the opinion that, if the LTTE did not exist, any sort of 'federal' solution would have a chance in hell of being carried through by the Sinhala majority? If so, you have too weak a grasp of history to occupy such high office. It is only the existence of the LTTE that has pressurised Sinhala politicians to even attempt to go this far (if you accept that there is a sincere will to pass the proposals through, which is doubtful). Indeed, if your strategy was successful and the LTTE was wiped out, that would be the final gravestone of the Tamil nation because it would leave them with no negotiating power at all while pitched against the full weight of the Buddhist clergy and vociferous chauvinists. The LTTE is the only guarantee against this, surely you realise this being an educated man.

I cannot deny the fact that you are a clever politician, with a great ability to persuade the international community to support the government's war against Tamils. But cleverness in itself is no virtue. The important matter is what your cleverness is being used for: to cover up to the world the horrendous plight of the N-E Tamils for whom you seem to have no compassion? To justify to the world the most callous military strategy yet used against the Tamils of the North East? To reduce a nation of people to complete destitution? To have not a handful but tens of thousands of children languishing in sub-human conditions while you 'shuttle' around to the major capitals trying to secure even more money to continue the war? That, Mr Kadirgamar, is now etched into your historical portrait, and it will establish your place unequivocally in the annals of Tamil history as a merciless collaborator against these people. This is your image among the great mass of Tamils, and this is why their blood can be felt boiling with every word they hear you utter. If this, Sir, is your cleverness, I wonder of what human value an Oxbridge education is. It may produce great debaters, but at the same time men of such low morality and crassness?

Believe me, I have tried hard to imagine what keeps you going. I have wondered, when you wake up in the morning, what moral convictions drive you to start your day? I wonder because every day when I awake, my first thoughts are for the children right now huddled in the jungles with the sound of bombs and sirens frightening them to death and making them panic out of their wits, fearing that they or someone next to them will be the next 'Tiger' to show up in the Defence Ministry's stastistics. Children will find it difficult to interpret how the Sinhalese can do this to them. And when they grow up (the ones lucky enough to grow up, that is) they will learn of this great Tamil debator, Lakshman Kadirgamar, who was being showered with praise by his Sinhala colleagues at the marvellous role he played in showing world the 'truth' about Sri Lanka. The Sinhala chauvinists truly could not believe their luck.

Then my thoughts move to those segregated for the purpose of 'security checks' in Jaffna, those inevitably tortured or killed if there is the slightest suspicion, under the strictest military rule. And then I remember you, Mr. Kadirgamar, as you attempt to stop the unstoppable tide of history - to stop the Tamil nation ever being free.

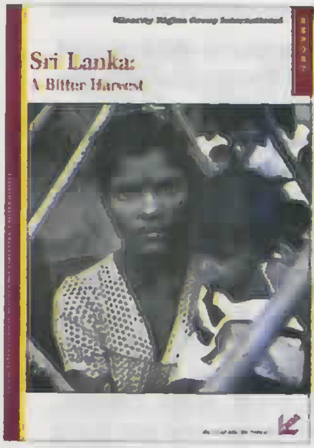
Then during my day the haunting question keeps coming up in my mind: does Mr. Kadirgamar really believe what he is doing is right? Or does he not care whether what he is doing is right?

And finally, at the end of my day when I fall down to sleep, I often have the same recurring dream. It is of a young Tamil girl opening a history book written in Tamil, some twenty years from now. It is called "The Birth of Tamil Eelam" and in it there is a whole chapter devoted to you, Mr Kadirgamar. It reads: 'The Role of Minister Kadirgamar (1994-7)'.

I wonder what your reaction will be to this letter? Will you turn the page and pass a comment to your family about some hysterical fellow attacking you in the paper? Will you reach for your cup of tea and begin another day in your high-profile, rewarding job?

Well, please remember those children in the jungles,Mr. Kadirgamar. Because they will remember you.

S. W.Rajah



SRI LANKA - A BITTER HARVEST

A Minority Rights Group International Report -1996

Sinnappu Maharasingam recalls the Walter Schwarz report-1975

"The makings of an embattled freedom movement now seem assembled, martyrs, prisoners and a pitiful of refugees . . . Biafra seemed less real." Walter Schwarz in the original Minority Rights Group Report (1975)

The above quotation is an insightful observation of **Walter Schwarz** in his MRG report of 1975.

The former Executive Director of MRG, **Ben Whitaker**, who took a deep interest on the plight of theTamils, wanted me, amongst few others, to speak to Walter Schwarz before he left to Sri Lanka and introduce Tamil human rights activists in Colombo. It should be mentioned that full support was given to the Council of the MRG by the Friends of Tamils chaired by the late **Sir John Foster QC, M.P. David Astor** and the **late Rev, Michael Scott** who recognised the urgency of an MRG report on the Sri Lankan Tamils as early as 1970 to bring to light to the Western democracies and international fora of the plight of the Tamil speaking people. London Tamils gave full support to MRG for the report to be published in 1975. Srimavo Bandaranayake (the mother of the present President) banned the distribution of this report in Sri Lanka as seditious material. That proved the point then with such force.

It is also significant to this review that in our discussions with Walter Schwarz, he saw similarities between the struggle of the Ebo people (the Biafran war of 1968/69) and the emerging Tamil people's struggle to restore their inalienable rights. We participated in protest and fast at the repression of Ebo people. **On his return he consciously felt a genuine understanding of the seriousness of the validity of recognising the rights ofTamil speaking people, not in the sense of minority rights, but as rights of identity as a race of people, which were destroyed by the cancerous effect of almost 400 years of colonial subjugation, and the plight in which the Tamils were left at the mercy of the Sinhala majority at the end of the colonial rule.** His prediction has come true. The Sinhala neo-colonialist expansion with its repression is the main factor that converted the Tamil youths to a legitimate armed resistance.

One emerging factor from all these must be recognised and seriously looked at by the international forum like MRG to recognise the reality that artificial boundaries were drawn or different ethnic races were brought together, with no respect to the wishes of the people. Sinhalese are victims as much the Tamils, but the colonial formula of divide and rule works with arms and aid for Sinhala neo-colonial expansion into Tamil territory.

It is not nationalism or power that drives the oppressed people in the last resort to seek self-determination. It is 'rebellion against tyranny and oppression' and the irresistable inherent urge to protect their inalienable rights to the usage of their lands, language and religions.

Over one million Ebo people died and thousands of children died of starvation, when the Wilson Labour government in power supplied arms and aid to Nigeria, as is happening now after the hanging of the leader Ken Saro-Wewa and others of another oppressed minority Ogoni people. Over 4 Million Tamil population of the northeast and highlands, are very much reduced by disappearances, displacements, and fleeing aboard as refugees. Britain is supplying arms and aid to successive Sinhala governments including that of President Chandrika Kumaratunga who has waged a secret war, where the 'ethnic cleansing' of the Tamil people is a daily occurence by the occupation army. Population of over 4 million Tamil-speaking people! Where are they now? Can any one account for the Tamil disappearances and extra judicial killings since 1958 anti-Tamil program? After 21 years of the first report, the world would like to see a indepth investigatory report.

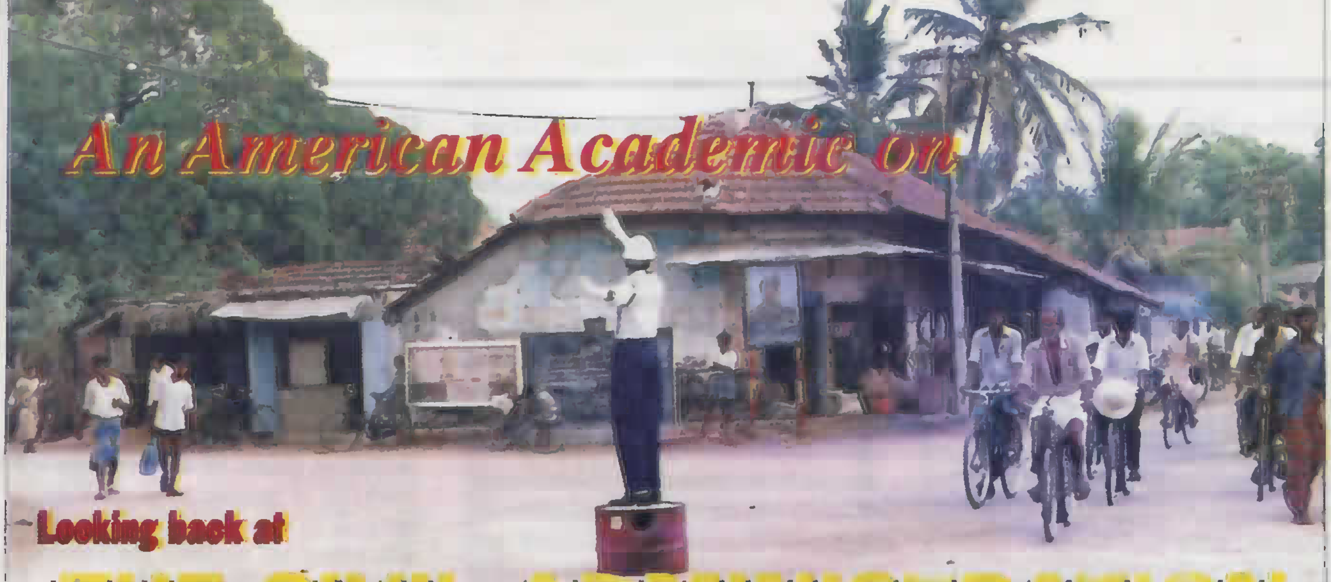
Over 700, 000 Tamils of the main land northern province have no proper food and medical health and other basic needs. There is constant airforce bombings, military shellings or army fire. The Jaffna peninsula is under army occupation and many are held in detentions, wherever army camps are situated. **The MRG research does not seem to convey to the readers this indepth understanding of the problems the Tamil people are facing under armed Sinhala occupation.**

The present report however is essential reading for all, who have an abiding interest on the gross violations of human rights of those who have suffered long victimisation of colonial rule and the process of understanding themselves from the debilitating effect this has had on them as individuals and as a people or different ethic origins in Sri Lanka.

The Tamil struggle against racism, colonialism and ethnic cleansing will go on in Sri Lanka till the rank and file of the Sinhala nation recognises its essence.

MRG must devote great attention in the understanding of "what is true and what is false" for a serious research on the Sri Lankan situation, which is kept out of sight from the attention of international fora, media and civilised societies.

An American Academic on



Looking back at

THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION IN TAMIL EELAM

A US Academic who spent several months in Tamil Eelam during the last three years outlines his observations on the LTTE administration of the north, as he saw it then. The report relates to the period before the Sri Lankan army occupation of Jaffna.

I spent a total of 18 months in the northern province of Sri Lanka since early 1994, as a volunteer working with fammers and educators. During this period I came to know the LTTE administrators under their administration of the Northern Province areas under their control. My observations below are based on that experience.

The Sri Lanka government services are provided through the Government Agent (and the divisions within his responsibility) and by government ministries, such as the departments of Agriculture, Education, Health, Irrigation, etc. Since 1988/89, positions in the north that became vacant due to retirement, resignation or transfer have not been filled in any of the government departments. Equipment, such as machinery, vehicles, etc. for the conduct of government services also have not been replaced since that time. As such, government services are provided by a skeleton staff, with none of the facilities that their couterparts in the rest of the island have. Electricity, transport, water and other such departments of the government do not function at all in the North.

The civil administration in the north, with the exception of the army camps, are under the control of the LTTE. Mr. Prabakaran is the Leader, equivalent to Head of State. The LTTE Civil administration is headed by Mr. Thamilchelvan. The two major administrative regions are the Jaffna Peninsula and the Vanni region. Services are provided by "sectors" and each sector is headed by a secretary (Porupalar - literal meaning - person responsible) - an LTTE appointee.

The Porupalar for Tamil Eelam Financial Division is Mr. Thamilenthi. Transport and Trade affairs are also the responsibility of the Finance sector. The Secretary of Justice is Mr. Para. The Secretary of the Protection Department (Police) is Mr. Nadesan. Mr. Ravi heads the Economic Development Department (TEEDOR) which is responsible for Agriculture, Fisheries, Industry, and Environment. The Education Department is headed by Mr. Ilangkumaran. I have not met the person in charge of the Health Department. Each of the Districts in the Vanni region and the Jaffna peninsula have LTTE offices for each of the Department and sections within the departments such as Finance, Justice, Police and TEEDOR. At the district level there are about 20 divisions functioning through committees, structured on functional as well as on departmental basis. The TEEDOR has a division consisting of 12 persons at the village level for each of their divisions.

The Visa (Pass) office, under the internal security division within the Eelam government, has offices in all towns. Visa or Pass is required to go out of the Northern region. When entering the Northern region visa is issued at the Omanthai LTTE checkpoint. At Thandikulam (Vavuniya) the Sri Lanka government issues a permit to go into Vavuniya town or to other parts of Sri Lanka. People who are fifty and over have no restrictions on leaving or entering the LTTE controlled area. However, those who are under 50 have to get someone to stand surety (bond) before they leave. Those who wish to leave the North for good have to pay an "exit fee". The amount depends on the financial status of the family. It can be up to Rs.30,000 per person.

At the district level, the LTTE staff coordinate their activities with the Government Agent (GA) and his staff. No decisions that concern the welfare of the people or the land is taken by the GA's office or government officers or committees without consultation with LTTE officers responsible for the sector and or area. In effect the GA's office, except for the routine government affairs such as salaries, pensions and other such matters, is used as an arm of the LTTE government.

Transportation

The civilian air link to the northeast was cut off in 1990. The shipping lanes are also closed to traffic other than the army and the international humanitarian agencies such as ICRC, UNHCR. There are no train services in the north. The railway lines in the north were destroyed during and after the Indian occupation. There are no tracks or stations now. Because of the embargo on iron, the railway lines are used as a source of iron. The train service up to the northen border town of Vavuniya is functioning on a regular basis. The journey of about 160km from Vavuniya to Jaffna takes 16 to 36 hours by road and sea. The roads are no longer maintained by the government, though the GA allocates limited funds sporadically to the LTTE operated infrastructure sector. There are foot-deep potholes on the roads, as well as on the gravel and sand tracks, which were once highways. A total ban on tar and road machinery has prevented repair of the roads. The LTTE administration has done limited repairs with locally available materials.

ST JOHN BOSCO'S SCHOOL

The LTTE administration has prepared blueprints ready to build airports, seaports, town centres and a comprehensive road and railway network, schools and other buildings in the northeast before the current hostilities started in April 1995.

Means of transport

There are no planes, cargo ships, trains, large buses, trucks or new cars in the north, for a population of over 1.2 million. There are approximately 200 pre-1956 Morris minor and Austin cars, 300 trishaws, 400 vans used as buses and a few hundred motorcycles. In all there are less than 2000 vehicles in operation. This is less than 10% of the vehicles that were in the North prior to 1956. Vehicle population in the north is less than 1% of the total vehicle population of Sri Lanka. This state of affairs was brought about not only by the economic blockade and embargo, but also due to the confiscation and destruction of vehicles by the invading Sri Lankan and Indian armies.

The main mode of passenger and small goods transport is bicycles, which number over 200,000. Most people walk or cycle (2 to 3 people on a bicycle is the norm). The LTTE operates public (road and sea) transport services. Privately run road transportation is also available. The fares, operations and passenger loads are prescribed and enforced by the LTTE administration. In spite of the limited vehicles, fuel, spare parts and tyres, the road and sea transport is efficient, reliable and orderly.

Communications

The north has no telecommunications link with the rest of the island or world. In total about 100 computers were in use before the October 95 offensive. The Sri Lanka radio and television programs are received in certain parts of the north with a tall antenna. International radio stations are the main source of reliable news. The LTTE operates an FM station for a few hours each day.

Electricity

Electricity was cut off to the north in 1990. The power lines and the transfommers are now in disrepair. Electricity is produced in small amounts by tiny generators, solar panels and windmills. Biogas is also produced. Kerosene lamps are used at night to study and for house-work. Remarkably, research and development is carried out, despite the army embargo and blockade, to produce large scale cheap energy from sources such as wind, waves, solar power and methanol gas. Firewood or kerosene is used for cooking.

Sewage

In the absence of a public sewage system, there are only individual septic tanks. This is now encouraged and regulated by the LTTE to protect the environment and control water pollution. Since the 1990 embargo on chlorine and cement, the latrines and wells are not repaired adequately and, the wells are not disinfected properly. This has lead to dangerous levels of coliforms in the drinking water. There are no pipe water systems for households. Water is drawn from the well by kerosene pumps or humans. Water pumps are a banned item and what is available now are those brought in before the war started. During the past four years some of the reservoirs, ponds and canals which the Sri Lankan government failed to repair, are being repaired. Cement is a banned item and repairs to reservoirs last only an year or two.

Schools und universities

Schools were functioning normally (with a Tamil curriculum, sports, music, dancing and prayers) before the invasion by the Sri Lankan army in October '95. University admissions are on a point system. Private tutories were flourishing. University faculties were operating with limited resources and facilities. Repairs to buildings and equipment are not done due to the embargo. The Faculty of Agriculture conducts lectures in wall-less, thatchroof buildings. Computer education is only at the theoretical level due to the embargo on computers and lack of electricity. Except for the Faculty of Agriculture at Kilinochchi, no other faculties of the University are functioning since the

October '95 army offensive. The university administration is now in Kilinochchi and Chavakachcheri. The staff and students are scattered in Vadamaratchchi, Thenmarachchi and the Vanni. The schools in the North were also disrupted in October. All schools in the North were closed to accommodate the refugees from Valigamam. In 1990-92 the schools in the islands and the northern coast were closed due to army operation that resulted in displacement of the people from these areas. In March the LTTE administration reopened the schools at the request of the parents and teachers.

Agriculture

This is a success story for the LTTE administrators. In 1994 I reviewed the agriculture policy manual of Tamil Eelam. It is a superb modern document which addressed all environmental concerns and the sustainability of agriculture production. I could not make any improvements on it. Despite the war, agricultural production reached a point that, if not for the war and the embargo on Ammonium sulphate, the north would have been in a position to export rice. This is something the Sinhalese government has tried to do since independence and has failed. LTTE achieved this within four years despite the war and the army embargo and blockade. Various cash crops like potatoes, tobacco and fruit trees are being cultivated very successfully. Agricultural research stations and garden centres have been set up by LTTE to ensure that the agricultural revolution is complete and the north can be self-sufficient, once peace returns.

When the government banned ammonium fertilizer to the north around July/August 1995, the LTTE administration established a food production program called "Vilai Poomi" with the advice and assistance of the Faculty of Agriculture, Farmers Welfare Societies and the extension staff working in the area. The government actions and the drought have hampered the program.

The process by which th lai Poomi project was established is a good example of the LTTE philosophy on administration and government. With the embargo on Ammonium Sulphate the TEEDOR estimated that the north will not be able to achieve the yields of the previous years. They then brought together farmers, agriculturists, researchers and extension workers to a two-day Seminar/workshop in September 1995, to discuss a plan prepared by the agriculturists and researchers from the University and the Regional Agricultural Research Station on food production with locally available material.

The Seminar was organized by TEEDOR (agriculture section) with Mr. Ravi giving the keynote address. It was held at the Faculty of Agriculture in Kilinochchi. The conference was opened and closed by Mr. Karikalan, who was in charge of affairs for the Vanni and Eastern Region. The Government Agent of Kilinochchi took part in the final stages of the workshop. Students of agriculture and the Sri Lankan government agriculture extension officers from the northern districts were actively involved in the preparation of the final project which was approved at the conference. At no point did the members of the LTTE interfere in the deliberations or decisions of the professional groups.

The decisions were approved by the workshop and given to the District Agriculture Committee (DAC) in the Northern Province who adopted it. The DAC consists of all the heads of divisions, the GA's senior staff, heads of other government departments, University deans and heads, farmers and other key citizens. LTTE members were also present and the GA was the Chairman. In October 1995, the DAC appointed a sub-committee to implement the Vilai Poomi project. The TEEDOR assisted and encouraged the implementation of the project.

All farmers are registered with the TEEDOR. All assistance to the farmers and distribution of scarce inputs are sold through the TEEDOR and the government agrarian services staff.

Fuel

Due to the embargo and economic blockade the fuel supply is limited. Fuel is received by the GA for the Multipurpose Co-operative Societies (MPCS). The distribution is monitored and controlled by the LTTE administration. There are no petrol stations, instead, roadside stalls sell kerosene in bottles. Most small spare parts for the cars are made in local workshops. Diesel is rationed and is used only to operate the few generators still left in the north. Since April, 1995 diesel is not available, but locally made diesel is available in small quantities. Tractors and other machinery operate on kerosene, and the local craftsmen have developed a unit which is attached to the exhaust mainfold of cars that allows kerosene to be used instead of petrol. The University operates their generators for about two hours at night and thereafter the students use the kerosene lamps. During kerosene shortage or when kerosene was required for the boats and lorries to transport displaced persons in November last year, kerosene sale was restricted to one litre per family per week. The trade of kerosene is monitored by the LTTE administration. No one is exempt from the rule.

Industry

I have studied the industrial development policy manual of Tamil Eelam. It is a modern plan of a free-enterprise system, with environmental protection and human safeguards built in. The industrial Development Organization (IDO) of the TEEDOR is responsible for promoting industrial development with loans and technical assistance. IDO also monitors the quality of the products and their environmental impact and makes recommendations to the manufacturers.

Industrial development in the north is suffering due to lack of electricity and fuel. This makes it impossible to start any large scale industries. Most of the industries are small cottage industries with power derived from human and animal effort. Some of these industries are sponsored by the LTTE. Despite the killing of several technicians and artisans by the Sri Lankan and the Indian Armies (and migration of others due to fear for their lives and unemployment), the LTTE has managed to train a new generation of workers with technical skills.

Housing

Very few new houses were built during the past 12 years. This is mainly due to the current war. The economic embargo and the blockade have made it difficult to build or repair homes especially those which were damaged by bombings and shelling by the Sri Lankan and Indian occupation forces. Most homes are over 30 years old. Those houses that were abandoned by the fleeing refugees are now maintained by the LTTE civil administration and given back to the owners who returned. House prices have appreciated significantly during the past 5 years. This is due to the shortage of housing created by the Sri Lankan and Indian armies who not only took over some of the residences but also destroyed over half the residences, offices, shops, factories, cinemas and warehouses. The government has not replaced them or paid compensation or given permits to purchase building materials for reconstruction. Property rights are now protected by the LTTE.

தமிழீழ வைப்பகம் BANK OF TAMILEELAM

Hospitals and clinics

The largest hospital in the north, the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, is not functioning. Other hospitals and clinics outside Jaffna city are operating with limited facilities despite the current invasion. This was possible only because of financial aid and human resources assistance to supplement the local doctors and nurses from the Christian missionaries, Red Cross, Care and other international charities. There are still a number of Tamil doctors and nurses working and practicing in the north on the strength of protection given by the LTTE. No new hospitals have been built during the past twenty years and the limited facilities and medicines available are reminiscent of pre World War II conditions in the north, or 19th century Europe. All aid and donations from foreign government and aid bodies have been diverted to the South in an attempt to force the northern residents to poverty and ill health, to pave the way for military, social, political and economic domination from the south.

Licenses and taxes

Licenses and taxes are collected to operate various services including a police force and a justice system. All motor vehicles and bicycles have to take a license and carry number or license plates issued by the LTTE administration. To protect the palmyrah and coconut trees an annual duty is levied. Cutting down these and other trees is by special permission only. There is also a tax on the sale of goods and services, and a duty on property transactions.

Banking system

Banks from the south are still operating in the north, mostly for taking deposits from the thrifty residents and to lend for business, speculation and development in the south. This is at the expense of the northern residents who need financing for agriculture, fishing, business vehicles, machinery, trade, housing and education. Banks from the south continue to earn commissions from foreign remittances by overseas Tamils, which amount to over US $300 million per year. In addition, the banks are charging a tax on these remittances to finance the war. The banks also use very old currency bank notes which are put together with cellotape or gum. The above were some of the points brought up by the north with the banks and the government, but to date it appears no steps have been taken to rectify the problems faced by the Tamils.

Since October, 1995, The Peoples Bank branch in Kilinochchi and other cities in the north has refused any loans to the farmers or traders, even though 85 to 90% of the loans are paid back. The rate of repayment in the south was 20 to 25%, but there loans are written off and new loans are given. The LTTE administration guarantees the loans and ensures the loans are paid back. In 1994 the repayment rate was 100%.

To meet the shortage of capital to finance small businesses, farmers, fishermen and others in need of capital for econmic development, the LTTE has set up a rural development bank and a commercial deposit taking bank. In addition, there is also a finance company operated by north-east entrepreneurs.

Bribery and corruption

The LTTE admmistration has been successful in virtually wiping out the caste system, bribery, corruption and begging. The age old dowry system is under review. The LTTE, with the assistance of progressive Tamils, is conducting an education campaign to abolish the dowry system. These social evils have not only hampered economic and social progress, but created dishonest politicians, administrators, businessmen and civilians in the whole of Sri Lanka.

Unemployment

Another great achievement of the LTTE administration is the successful reduction in unemployment and the substantial increase in the employment opportunities for women. Following the world trend, a high proportion of women are employed in the medical, judicial, security, police, professional and administrative services. Their performance in terms of professionalism, attitude and politeness gives Tamils hope for greater achievement in economic and social progress in the future. Practically every person who is willing to work and perform well is offered employment at reasonable wages, similar to wages paid by the Sri Lanka government or related businesses. In fact, there were vacancies for skilled workers, teachers and professionals before the current invasion by the Sri Lanka armed forces.

Discipline

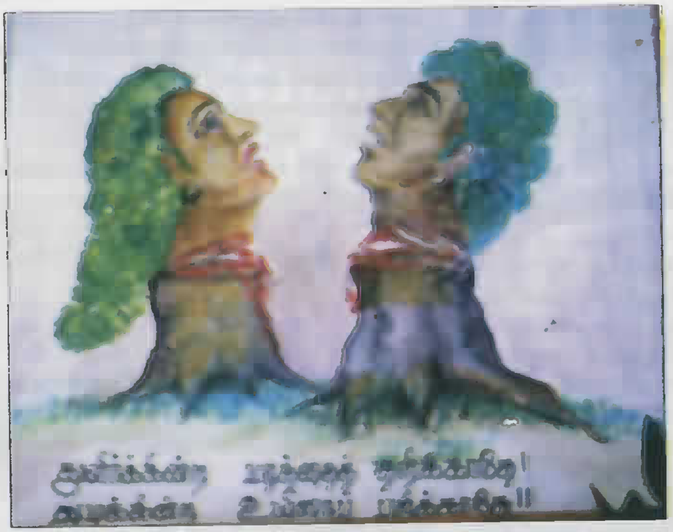
Discipline is another area in which the LTTE administration has made progress. In waiting for a bus or a boat, people stand in queues in an orderly fashion. Hire vehicles take their turn.

The safety of all vehicles and especially the boats are rigorously checked. The safety of passengers who travel long distances at night are ensured by the LTTE imposed logistics.

High priority is given to the eradication of poverty. The northern residents, despite the economic embargo and the blockade, are reasonably well dressed, groomed and observe reasonable standards of hygiene. Public places are kept clean.

Police force

The LTTE administration has set up police stations all over the North. Violent crimes have dropped drastically. In Kilinochchi during the two years I was there, there was one rape and two murders. The cases were tried, appeals heard and the death penalty was passed. Public drunkenness is under control. Citizen groups are, however, calling for a total ban on liquor. LTTE members do not drink or serve drinks to anyone at any functions. Most of the complaints at the police stations were family quarrels, drurnkenness or property disputes. Robberies are rare. It is safe for a single woman to move about without fear of robbery, molestation or rape - a matter for which people are grateful, especially after what they suffered at the hands of some of the Sri Lankan and Indian soldiers in the past. Police are unarmed, helpful and free of corruption or favoritism.



LTTE campaign against felling of trees

LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran takes the salute at a Police march-past.

Judicial system

Law courts set up by the LTTE administration are in operation in the main districts of the north. Judgments are handled usually within a month. Legal costs are one of the lowest in the world. Lawyers who have left the North do complain. The citizens prefer the present judicial system because of the lower cost and quicker resolution. Legal precedents are based on existing laws in the north, updated for current social values (e.g. spousal abuse). Most of the disputes that would have gone to courts twenty years ago are solved by mediation out-side the courts. By noon the courts are empty in Kilinochchi.

Environment and pollution

The absence of large scale factories, fewer vehicles, scarcity of petrol, diesel and other industrial pollutants has made the north-east pollution free. The embargo on Nitrogen fertilizers has also reduced the Nitrogen level in wells and waterways. Previously, the N-level was twice the VMO recommended limit.

The LTTE administrators initiated a green revolution in 1991 which is already showing results. Garden centres have been set up in towns and villages for plant experimentation and supply of vegetable and fruit tree seedlings to the public at cost (often free to those who cannot afford them.) Most types of tropical plants are available. Citizens are encouraged to plant vegetable and fruit trees in their gardens. The roadsides are being planted with shady trees. Large tracts of sandy coastlines are being planted with coconut, palmyrah, teak and Casuarina trees. The LTTE policy on forest and wildlife preservation since 1990 has now stopped deforestation. Before 1990, under the Sri Lanka administration, 25 lorry loads of prime timber was leaving the North to the South illegally every year. Now no tree can be cut down by anyone without a permit. Elephants are also protected by law. The

North has 40% of its land in forests. The World Earth Day is celebrated by all households, government departments, schools and businesses by planting a tree each. LTTE administration observes all international days.

Town Planning

The LTTE administration in 1990 formed a committee of specialists from the University, Government departments, private sector and citizens to plan and rebuild the Jaffna city. The committee completed its work under the chairmanship of the then Vice Chancellor, Prof A. Thurairajah, a civil engineer. The plan and architect drawing were presented by the LTTE infrastructure team at a meeting of the DAC in Kilinochchi in 1994 where I was present. It is a modern plan for a destroyed ancient city. During my stay, a committee was elected to plan the Kilinochchi and Mankulam towns, which completed the draft in April 1995. The committee had full freedom and all assistance to hold meetings for people to present their views and recommendations.

Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Seminar and Workshop.

In May 1994, the LTTE administration undertook to estimate the cost of reconstruction and rehabilitation. The TEEDOR Secretariat coordinated the exercise. Subcommittees for each of the sectors were formed who, in consultation with the public, from records and direct inspection, assessed the reconstruction need and prepared the policies, plans and estimation of cost. Preliminary documents were then sent by the GA to the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. A private consultation team headed by Dr. Gunasingam was appointed by the Ministry to coordinate this activity. These documents were then discussed in a three day Seminar/Workshop in July 1994 at the conference hall of the University of Jaffna in Thinnevely, under the patronage of Mr. Thamilchelvan, Mr. Karikalan and the organization of Mr. Ravi. A final document was produced and a summary of this was submitted at the 1995 Peace talks.

The government in the next peace talk session produced a proposal for the reconstruction of the North which was estimated at Rs. 39.9 billion. The LTTE leaders presented the government document to the committee that produced the initial draft and organized another Seminar Workshop in Kilinochchi on 4th and 5th January 1995, with wider representation from other districts with about 500 participants from all walks of life, including the government departments responsible for various sectors. The final report was then given to the 3rd peace talk session.

At no time did the LTTE leaders dictate to or interfere in the functioning of the planning committee. The LTTE council accepted the document as presented without any change. The last meeting with the committee and the private consultants was held in Jaffna. At one stage the chairman of the consultancy group said to Mr. Ravi (who chaired the meeting to finalize the proposal) that his team came to talk to the LTTE about the plan and did not want to discuss the proposals with the members of the heads of government departments or others. Mr. Ravi replied that the LTTE recognizes the consultancy group and the committee as the experts, and what this group agrees to is acceptable to the LTTE administration.

This was the standard approach of the LTTE in all matters concerning the development of the North. I have had the privilege of examining the final draft of the document. The final draft was similar to the first draft in cost (Rs.39.9 billion) but had more details and contained a section giving the summary of the proposal presented by the LTTE for approximately Rs. 100 billion. I have not seen this level of mass participation of citizens in planning processes of governmental function anywhere else. In the south such a process is highly centralized.

Neeran

(May 10,1996)

LTTE and FRONTLINE

We publish without comment the following Letter to the Editor, published in the Indian FRONTLINE magazine dated August 23, 1996:

The editorial policy of *Frontline* is the sole preserve of Kasturi & Sons by virtue of investment. I hope, however, that a long-standing reader may be permitted a comment or two. Having known the proclivities of your star contributor, D. B. S. Jeyaraj (whose, portrait adorns page 117 of Frontline of May 31, 1996) for well over a decade, I can confidently state that he is not the injured party he makes himself out to be. **Has he ever undergone even half the indignities suffered by our veteran journalist S. Sivanayagam who was dragged about the Tamil Nadu courts in chains, half blind and diabetic some years ago?**

First and foremost, Jeyaraj is associated with the English daily *The Island*, reputedly the sword arm of Sinhala chauvinism. This paper is the property of the ruling family of, Sri Lanka, the Ratwattes **Needless to say, the President, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister are all Ratwattes.** Jeyaraj may protest he is but the conduit of anti-Tamil interests. **For the likes of N. Ram any Stick is good enough to beat the LTTE.**

K. Kanavathipillai
Visuvamadu, Sri Lanka

What the LTTE official organ said about U.S. stand in Sri Lanka

The authentic translated version of the editorial of the LTTE official organ 'Viduthalai Puligal' of 1 - 15, July, 1996 commenting on the US stand in the ethnic conflict is given below. The title of the editorial reads as, 'America's biased stand on Sri Lanka's ethnic question'

In recent times, it is evident that the United States is taking a greater interest in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Taking a one-sided position, America is showing active interest in assisting Sri Lanka government on the political and military levels.

A unit of 'Green Beret' special commandos have arrived in Colombo and involved in training the Sri Lankan forces.

Reports and communiques issued by the US State Department outrightly condemns the acts of liberation war of the Tamils as acts of terrorism.

America has shifted from its former position of not selling lethal weapons to the government of Sri Lanka and is at present selling such arms.

America is behind the scene in encouraging its allied states to sell lethal weapons at concession rates to the Sri Lankan government.

We are deeply concerned to note that the American administration which is committed to the noble principles of global peace and human rights, has taken a one-sided position in the Sri Lanka-LTTE armed conflict and seeks to condemn unilaterally the acts of war of the Tamil people.

As a consequence of this American approach, it has become possible that the war crimes of the Sinhala state and the legitimacy of the Tamil struggle would be concealed from the world community.

The American stand in providing political and military assistance and its collaboration to a repressive regime that has oppressed the Tamil nation for the last 40 years have caused grave anxiety to the Eelam Tamils.

The main reason for this misplaced approach of the US government is the failure to comprehend the complex historical back-ground of the Tamil-Sinhala ethnic contradiction.

Having studied in depth the historical basis for the ethnic conflict between the oppressive Sinhala state and the oppressed Tamil nation, the US government should have initiated diplomatic manoeuvres to find an amicable political settlement. Instead, America has taken side with the repressive regime. This has caused deep dismay to the Tamils.

At this conjuncture following the fall of Jaffna peninsula to Sinhala military aggression when different sources have been pressurising Sri Lanka to seek a political settlement through negotiation it would not be prudent on the part of American administration to assist the military approach of the Sinhala chauvinists.

At the sametime funds required for the Sri Lankan military efforts are released by the international funding agencies with the blessing of the American government. It goes without question that foreign loans go to make the back-bone of the war machine. In this circumstances the American military training, arms supply and propaganda will help to encourage Sri Lankan military approach.

There are possibilities for the American government to play a constructive role in Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. Tamil people desire that America should abandon its one-sided approach and adopt a neutral stand on the ethnic conflict. The American policy makers should realise that assisting Sri Lanka's current military approach contravenes the US principles of world peace and human rights.

It is the fervent hope of the Tamil people that America should approach the issue impartially adopting neutrality and make initiatives to create a congenial atmosphere for peace. If on the contrary America continues to support Sri Lankan war effort, it would pave the way for the escalation of the war, complicate the ethnic conflict and augment human suffering. Therefore, the Tamils earnestly desire that US government would pursue a policy of moderation and impartiality towards the island's ethnic question and make diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Britain will not ban LTTE political activities

Britain will allow Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels to continue political activities in London despite its condemnation of the group's guerrilla attacks, British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said on Saturday.

Rifkind, in Colombo as part of a five-nation Asian trip, told a news conference that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), fighting for an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils, had the right to express their political views.

``We are aware of the problems of terrorism that exist in this country," he said after meeting Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga and Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar.

``We have a great sympathy for the people of Sri Lanka because we also, in Britain, are victims of terrorism. We also have a terrorist organisation that has destroyed innocent lives and brought damage and destruction to innocent people in pursuit of their political objectives."

The Sri Lankan government says more than 50,000 people have died in the 13-year-old war between the LTTE and the army.

Colombo has so far not outlawed the LTTE, wanting to retain the option of eventually resuming peace talks with the rebels.

Colombo officials said, however, that hardliners in the government and military were pushing for a ban, hoping it would curb the group's international propaganda and funding.

Hardliners noted that Western governments had told Sri Lanka they could not crack down on rebel activities on their soil as long as the LTTE did not break their laws and remained a legal organisation in Sri Lanka.

But Rifkind said Britain respected political freedom and ruled out any crackdown on the LTTE's political activities even if the Sri Lankan government did ban the group. The Tigers have their international propaganda headquarters in London.

``There are in London many people from many countries around the world who have their political differences with their governments," Rifkind said.

Tamils, like anyone from any country, must obey British law that prohibits support of terrorism.

``If they simply express political views, that is their right," Rifkind said. ``If they have a building or an office the world cannot prevent them from doing so."

He added: ``We have to act in London according to British law, and the law acts as a result of a decision taken by individuals, not by organisations. Organisations are made up of

"LTTE no different fr

The British Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, says no action can be taken to restrict the activities of Tamil Tiger representatives in London despite a declaration by the Group of Seven richest countries to stamp out international terrorism. **Speaking on an official visit to Sri Lanka, Mr.Rifkind said there was no proof that the London office of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was engaged in illegal activities or that money raised by Tamils living in Britain was going to support the rebels.** Our correspondent in Colombo, Flora Botsford reports.

(Flora Botsford reports from Colombo)

Malcolm Rifkind faced a news conference in Colombo which was dominated by the subject of Britain's perceived tolerance of Tamil Tiger representatives in London. From the London office of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or the LTTE, journalists around the world receive by fax daily reports of the situation in Sri Lanka, where Tamil Tiger rebels have been fighting a thirteen year war for a separate state. It's also alleged that the office is used as a fund raising conduit for Tamil Expatriates in Britain and elsewhere who support the rebels. But although Mr.Rifkind said the LTTE did resort to acts of terrorism which he condemned, he said it was also a political organisation which was no banned, even in Sri Lanka. But the mai problem with tightening up on the activities of the London office, he said, wa lack of proof:

Botsford: If then you could prove tha someone on British soil was a member o the LTTE, would that make a difference

Malcolm Rifkind: The LTTE in th

people. We cannot take an organisation to court," Rifkind added.

``Terrorism is an international evil, and I believe there is a common responsibility of all democratic governments who believe in a rule of law to cooperate in eradicating terrorism wherever it exists."

He said Colombo's efforts ``to eliminate terrorism do deserve the support of the international community," adding however that only individual violators could be punished in his country.

The British minister said London welcomed Sri Lanka's efforts to find a peaceful solution to the ethnic war.

``A democracy in Sri Lanka, like a democracy in the United Kingdom, instinctively looks for a political resolution while at the same time fighting resolutely against terrorism and they need support," he said.

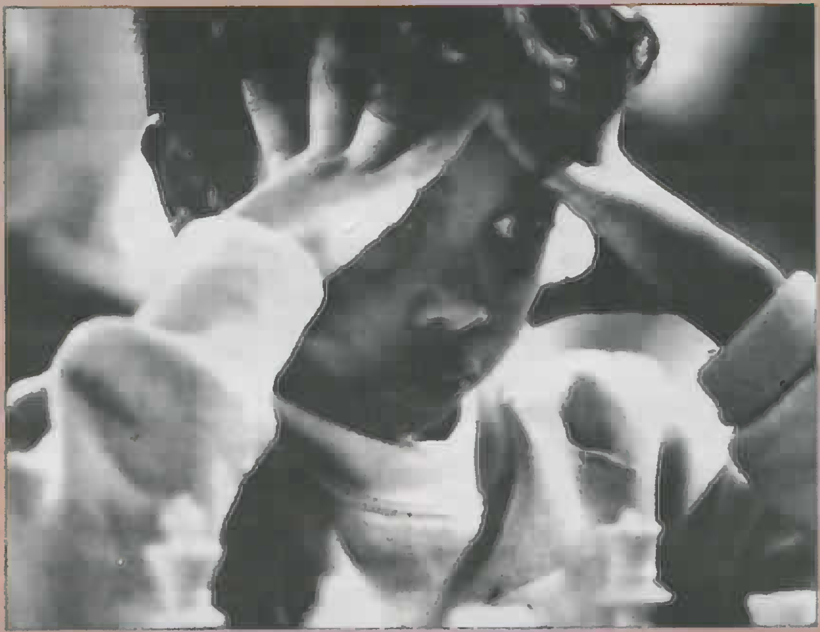
The Sri Lankan government has said it wants to present a devolution package to parliament next year to allow greater automomy to the Tamil minority in the country's north and east.

n Sinn Fein"

respect is no different to Sinn Fein or IRA. You can't under British law take action against an organisation. What you can do is to take action against an individual who is a terrorist or who is giving active support to terrorism. We need evidence against individuals, that's what our courts require, that's what the rule of law is about.

One action which Britain was supporting was to tighten up international law on political asylum. Mr. Rifkind said a request had been made at the United Nations to change the 1951 Convention on Refugees to make it impossible for convicted terrorists to claim refugee status in a foreign country. British officials say the largest number of asylum seekers arriving in Britain come from Sri Lanka - about thirty every week - and most of them are economic migrants rather than political refugees.

Tamil boy and the British Chess Scene



Murugan: *Fierece concentration at the board*

A Sri Lankan Tamil boy, MURUGAN THIRUCHELVAM, figures prominently in Britain's Junior Chess scene.

"Children as young as four are playing in high-powerd chess tournaments, egged on by competitive adults. Is the increasingly aggressive world of junior chess merely a vicarious battleground for fathers?" asks the INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY, London in its issue of 11 August '96.

Reporting on the Under - 11 Inter-Association Chess championship, Dinah Hall writes:-

"......... the Richmond team today simply want to thrash Wey Valley, their arch-rivals, who last time beat them by half a point. This time, Richmond have their secret weapon on board - one tiny, seven-year old Murugan Thiruchelvam, seemingly destined to follow in the footsteps of Luke Mcshane, Britain's top junior player and a fellow club member. Murugan's father, a quietly determined Sri Lankan, would clearly rather have his son on a lower board, where the burden on him would be less, but bows reluctantly to the team manager's judgement. Murugan started playing chess at the age of four, after watching his older brother at the computer, and won his first tournament at four and a half. His father denies putting pressure on him. "Children have got to have the heart to do something", he says, "not just do it for the sake of doing it. At the moment, he enjoys chess, but he is also very interested in music". Interest however, seems to lead inexorably to competition. Murugan recently started playing the Eastern Drum and has already won an Under-16s Beginners' Trophy".

THOUSANDS OF TAMILS RALLY IN FRONT OF UN CENTRE

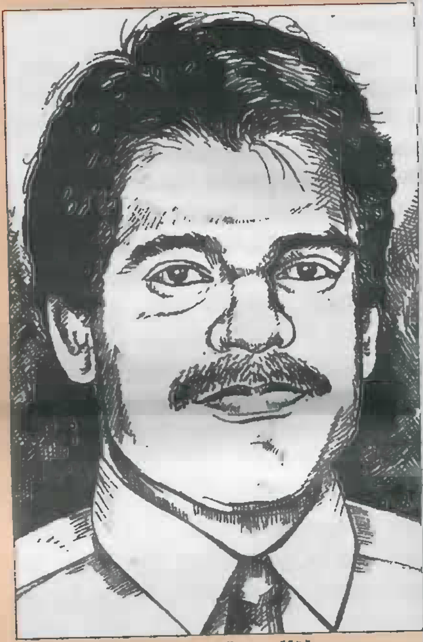
Tribune de Geneve
Tuesday, August 27th, 1996.

About 10,000 Tamils, according to the organizers, wearing black slacks and white shirts (6,000 according to the police), assembled yesterday on the Nations' place, in front of the UN Centre at Geneva. They were especially asking the release of Nadarajah Muralitharan, leader of the Tamil Tigers in Switzerland, in jail in Zurich since last April.

Monday, this exceptional procession, disturbing the traffic, in particular the Geneva public transporting company (lines 4, 44, 5, 8, F, V) moved off in a very disciplined way, for the biggest alleviation of the police forces, at about 14.45 from the Cornavin station. Arrived by two special trains (one coming from Zurich, the other from Zug), but also by cars from the entire Switzerland, the thousands of demonstrators passed by the Montbrillant street to finally stay on the Nations' place. The march was covered with the red and yellow colored flags of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

With their streamers, the participants, among those women with colored sarees and numerous children were asking for the end of the massacres committed against their people in Sri Lanka. "We want that the government stops to bomb the hospitals, the temples and the churches", were chanting the demonstrators.

They ask the release of the LTTE coordinator in Switzerland, Nadarajah Muralitharan, suspected to have extorted funds and to be member of a criminal organization. He was arrested with some other persons, now released, in a raid in six German cantons. He is in jail in Zurich, without any reasons according to the organisers. Recently, his lawyer mentioned in Zurich that his client was detained on the base of fallacious accusations from people pushed to false testimony by the LTTE rival organizations.



Nadarajah Muralitharan

The demonstrators also gave a memorandum to the UN High Commissioner for the Human Rights. They wished that the armed resistance of the Tamils is recognized as a "legitimate struggle". They also asked "the immediate stop of the state terrorism" against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

The contesters requested to stop sending back the asylum seekers living in Switzerland to Sri Lanka and also accused the Sri Lankan government of embezzling the international financial assistance for the purpose of buying weapons.

Laurence Bezaguet

Translation 28.8.96/
Madeleine Michael

CESSEZ DE BOMBAR
LES ECOLES
TAMOULES
L EMBARGO
SUR LES VIVRES
ET LES MEDICAMENTS
POUR LES TAMOULS
L.T.T.E
STOP
Bombing

TAMILS APPEAL TO UN SUB-COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, GENEVA

People donating money

Adrian Wijemanne and Fr.S.J.Emmanuel at the rally

Morgenthaler Brigitte, a Swiss national singing at the rally

Lawrence Thilakar addressing the rally

Malaysian Peace group tells Chandrika:

Yours is a recipe for national disaster

CENPEACE

A demonstration was held in front of the Sri Lankan High Commission at 11.00a.m. on Wednesday, 21st August 1996 to protest the human rights violation of the Tamil civilians in Vanni by the government of Sri Lanka by means of an economic blockade and by indiscriminate bombing. The demonstration was under the auspices of The Centre of Peace Initiatives (CENPEACE) and other NGO's and Tamil organisations and a memorandum for President Chandrika was handed over to the High Commissioner. The copies of the memorandum was handed over to the High Commissioners of the United Kingdom and UN as well as to the Ambassadors of U.S.A. and Japan. Placards and banners were displayed bearing slogans such as ‘Stop bombing Tamil civilians’, ‘Stop starving Tamil civilians’, ‘Let International Agencies distribute aid to the civilians’, ‘Practice Buddha’s Ahimsa’, ‘Let in International News Agencies’, ‘Peace with Justice for Tamils’ etc.

Her Excellency
Chandrika Kumaratunga
President of Sri Lanka
(through the Sri Lankan High Commission, Kuala Lumpur)

Your Excellency,

We would like to submit the following memorandum to you on the subject of “A Peace Initiative for War-torn Sri Lanka”. It is submitted in a constructive sprit, in the light of commonsense of what is practicable under the current prevailing circumstances, and it is hoped that it will engender some fresh thinking on your part and that of your government in cutting the Gordian Knot of war and ushering your ‘Paradise Island’ into a period of peace and prosperity for all the peoples living in it. This is not to say there is no danger in any such initiative proposed. But with the fates of your father and your husband before you, you would have been well aware of the dangers when you undertook the onerous and noble task of bringing peace to your peoples from a 48-year period of strife and pain that has been their lot since their independence - an independence which was achieved by the joint-struggle of the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples on basis of equal sacrifices.

Having won your independence on that basis of equality your leaders went on to conduct the affairs of post-independence Ceylon on the new affirmative basis that the Sinhalese owned the entire island and that all the other minorities were living in the island on their sufferance as migrant interlopers enjoyoing the benefits of the Buddhist spirit of tolerance. As you are a student of political science from Sorbonne University you will readily agree, we are sure, that can be a recipe for national disaster in any country.

SRI LANKA
HIGH COMMISSION

The wonder is that none of your leaders apparently knew the dangers of this head-long course and hoped to get around such dangers as may arise with diplomatic manipulation - and help from the international community! Such a line of argument, surely, is not practical politics - North, South, East or West - and must inevitably lead to war sooner than later. It is a Gandhian non-violent Satyagraha struggle until at last the 1972 Republican Constitution closed all avenues of protest, leaving open only armed struggle which the LTTE has put in hand credibly.

2. You came to power on a “Peace Constituency” because the majority of your peoples yearned for peace - so do we here in Malaysia empathize with the sufferings of your war-torn peoples, the more so, because many of us have kith and kin among them. The overwhelming majority of your “Peace Constituency” consisted of the lesser advantaged segments of the Sinhala people who saw their sons crippled and killed and their earnings eaten away by the demands of this, what appeared to them, a wholly unnecessary war. They yearned for peace, they also dominated your vote-bank - and you promised them “Peace Now” if they voted for you, and so indeed they did. But since then the pitch of your

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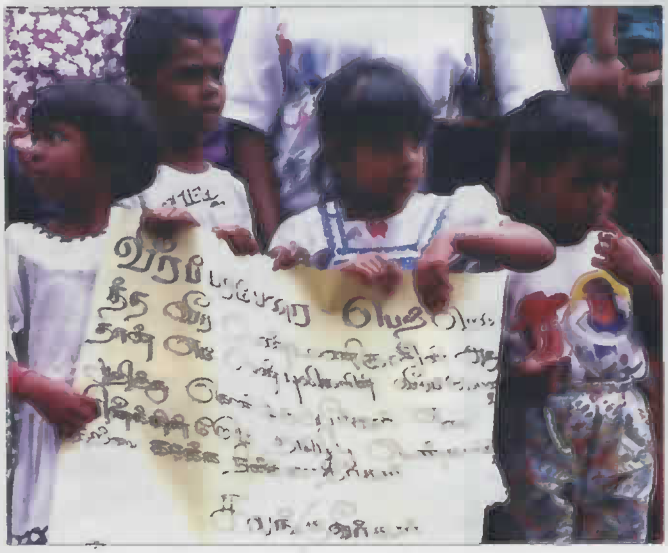
promise has queered into "War for Peace"! That must be as quizzical to them as it certainly is to us - and no doubt to the rest of an unbelieving world! Such a contradiction in terms is like "the kiss of death" or "the peace of the grave"!

This long-drawn-out war has brought into tangible existence certain realities. Some of them are:

a) The United State of Ceylon is dead. It died in 1972. The Promethean heat of life can never more be breathed into its corpse with non-starters such as the "Peace Package" you now put on offer probably because you repent the misdeeds of your predecessors in office. It was not a "United State" - it was a "Divided State" joining the Sinhala and Tamil people together like incompatible Siamese-twins, with the larger Sinhala twin gripping the smaller Tamil twin in a neo-colonialist death-throttle even at birth. Then this monster began to eat its own children, both Sinhala and Tamil, until after 1983 more than 50,000 had been killed. Thus it forfeited, under the inexorable Laws of Karma, almost half of the land area of the island it inhabited over which your writ does not run.

b) The leadership of your armed forces has developed a vested interest in continuing this war. Indeed, it is even rumoured that it has already made you into its puppet and is maintaining you in your office only in order to bemuse and inveigle the international aid-donors so that it could carry on what, to some of its members, is a profitable war.



c) Your armed forces do not have the stamina, the man-power, the logistics nor even the stomach to defeat the Tigers in a People's War.

The Russians with all their hi-tech capability are still not able to defeat the Chechens, Likewise, Mullaitivu and Operation Victory of Truth (Sath Jaya) have brought home the truth that the Tigers are by no means a "spent force" as claimed by these "Conquerors".

d) The escalating costs of this war are draining your economy of billions of dollars precipitating social unrest among your people for which reason you have now been forced to extend your emergency regulations to apply throughout the island.

e) You have a precarious majority of only one seat in your Parliament with the support of about 10 alliance partners of whom the Colombo-based Tamil-speaking members have a track-record of swinging with the wind and "crossing the floor". Already these Tamil-speakers have told you that it would be "foolish of the Tigers to lay down their arms considering that after nine years of having joined the main stream of the democratic process they have nothing to show the Tamil people of any achievement of their aspirations."

(f) Your indiscriminate bombing and shelling of Tamil civilians in your Operations Sunshine and Sath Jaya in your "War Without Witness" has, nevertheless, horrified the world. In the meanwhile, both your government and the American government have confirmed that American Green Berets are training your soldiers in Sri Lanka in humanitarian battle-field medivac tactics. This is bound to alarm your giant neighbour India who may see this development as your ploy to balance the Americans against her. The inevitable conclusion that must be drawn from the above "Realities", namely, that a stalemated situation has developed in this war with the Tigers and that, therefore, you are losing the war. The logic of a people's War is that if the government side is not winning then it losing the war and that an army can never suppress a People's Uprising.

3. The path to peace and progress for both the Sinhala and Tamil nations in that island must lie in accepting this manifest fact - the sooner the better to save the peoples' more needless suffering. There is, according to enlightened political thinking in other parts of the world, nothing wrong in "separation" if that would be the answer to meet the exigencies of historical inevitability as in the present case. Whether that is to be federal, confederal or totally separate statehood is a matter for negotiations between these two contending nations and, in view of the lack of trust between two parties, international representatives acceptable to both parties may be invited to be present at the negotiations as observers.

4. Historically, there has never existed any "United State" in the island until the Soulbury Constitution of 1948. The Colebrook Commission of 1833 merely amalgamated all the constituent states for "supervisory convenience" but administrated them separately as in the pre-colonial period. There existed three independent kingdoms in the island, namely,

(1) The Kingdom of Jaffna in the North, (2) The Kingdom of Kandy at the Centre, and, (3) the Kingdom of Rohana in the South. These kingdoms waxed and waned covering territory in between and, for short periods, even absorbed one another - but the basic structure of a tripple balance remained constant keeping the peace in the island until European colonialism intruded into this equilibrium.

5. History is full of examples where nations have separated from each other by the exercise of the right of self-determination and prospered in peace thereafter - Belgium from the Union with Holland in 1830, Norway from the Scandinavian Union with Sweden in 1906, the Czechs and Slovaks from Czechoslovakia recently, not to speak of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965 to mention just a few.

6. In conclusion, may we plead with you please, in the name of humanity and in the light of the present memorandum, to stop bombing and shelling and starving Tamil civilians which not only contravenes all norms of civilised behaviour in the 20th century but also Gautama Buddha's doctrine of "Ahimsa Paramo Dharma". Besides such atrocities are perfectly useless in winning the hearts and minds of any people, let alone the Tamil people.

To bring about peace with justice in Sri Lanka at the earliest possible time, and as a matter of urgency, we suggest:

1. Negotiations

(1) The parties to the conflict should immediately resume un,. conditional negotiations aimed at a just and durable political settlement reflecting the reality that Sri Lanka is an island inhabited by the Sinhala and Tamil peoples, each with their own historical and traditional lands.

CHANDRIKA
IS A
KILLER

(11) Because of the mutual mistrust between the two parties, the negotiations should be conducted under mutually acceptable facilitation and international observation.

2. Principles

(1) The ultimate goal of the parties to the conflict must be rights, safety, security and freedom of all the peoples of Sri Lanka. The people must be immediately relieved of their suffering.

(11) The present conflict evidences that the unitary state in its present form, incorporating both the Sinhala and Tamil peoples, is inconsistent with the peace and security of the peoples of Sri Lanka at this time.

(111) Accordingly, the negotiations must be aimed at reaching an agreement on how the administration and governance of the Tamil people can be vested in the Tamil people themselves, consistent with their aspirations and the safety and security of the peoples of Sri Lanka.

3. The Process

(1) The safety and wellbeing of the people demand an early ceasefire and other steps to de-escalate the war for a fixed or indefinite period while negotiations are proceeding.

(11) To relieve the suffering of the civilian population, the economic embargo imposed by the Sri Lankan government in traditional Tamil areas must be immediately lifted. International humanitarian workers and observers including the international media must be admitted to all areas of the country.

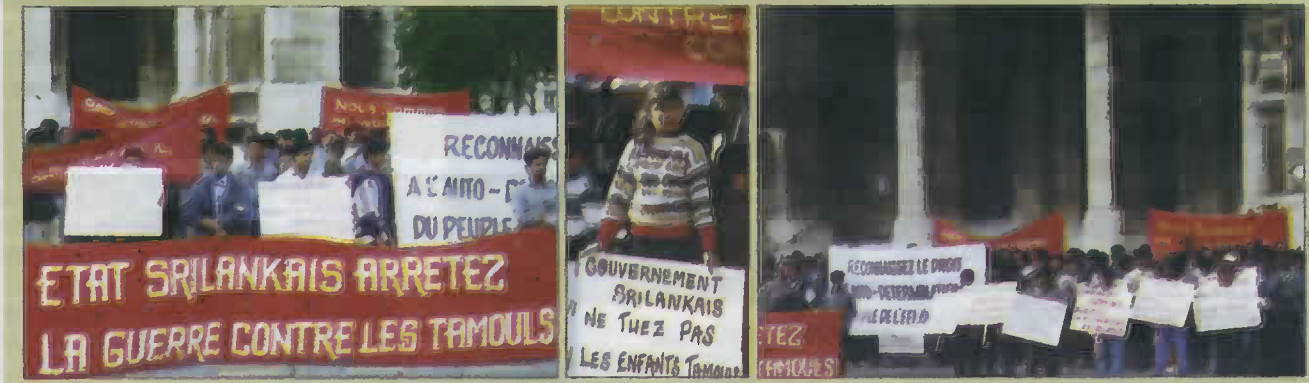
(111) An independent international fact-finding mission must be urgently sent to Sri Lanka to report on the application of humanitarian law and the human rights situation in the whole country, particularly the north-east.

We thank you for your attention and consideration.

Yours sincerely,
FAN YEW TENG
Executive Director
CENPEACE & On Behalf of
Endorsing NGOs

Liberation Tigers
TAMIL EELAM

London Demonstration against Sri Lankan atrocities - 17th August, 1996


ETAT SRILANKAIS ARRETEZ
LA GUERRE CONTRE LES TAMOULS
RECONNAISS
A L'AUTO-D
DU PEUPLE
GOUVERNEMENT
SRILANKAIS
NE TUEZ PAS
LES ENFANTS TAMOULS

Protesters in Paris - 2nd September 1996

Cultural performances in Norway - 3rd August, 1996

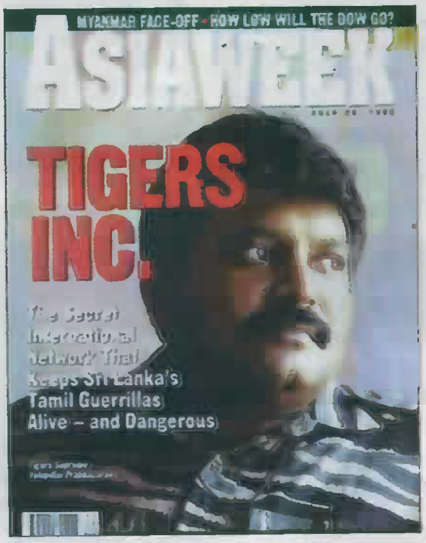
Liberation Songs in London - 17th August 1996

Rebuttals

By ***Sachi Sri Kantha*** *of Fukuroi city, Japan, Professor* ***Kopan Mahadeva*** *of Birmingham, UK, and* ***N.Singam*** *of Victoria Park Avenue, Toronto, Canada.*

Sachi Sri Kantha's rejoinder published in ASIAWEEK of August 16, 1996. This was in reply to a cover story run by the magazine in its issue of July 26, with a 7-page report by ASIAWEEK contributor Anthony Davis. The cover carried a photograph of "Tigers Supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran" and the headline TIGERS INC.

Within the limits of not antagonizing the political and military-intelligence establishments in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, Anthony Davis has done a good profile of Tamil guerrilla leader Velupillai Prabhakaran ["Tigers Inc., "THE COVER, July 26]. Prabhakaran is not an angel. But he is not a devil either, as projected by the Sri Lankan political establishment for the past 13 years. Davis insults the intelligence of the majority of the Tamil diaspora with the claim that Prabhakaran can extort money from them at whim. He remains their hope against the duplicity of the Indian Intelligence Service (RAW), who used the Sri Lankan Tamil issue to advance Indian expansionism.



Those who have read the history of the liberation struggles in the U.S., China, Israel and Palestine can grasp that Prabhakaran's profile as presented doesn't differ much from those of George Washington, Mao Zedong, Menachem Begin and Yassir Arafat. And don't forget that designated "terrorists" like Begin, Nelson Mandela and Arafat could metamorphose into "statesmen" and even receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Davis's source, Rohan Gunaratna, has figured out that the Tigers may be harvesting revenues worth nearly $24 million per annum. But this figure is 1/25 of the current Sri Lankan annual defense expenditure of nearly $600 million. Prabhakaran may be deficient in university education, but he surely has heeded one of Albert Einstein's maxims:

"Organized power can be opposed only by organized power." If you count the number of Sri Lankan service chiefs who have tried to outsmart Prabhakaran since 1983, one can only marvel at his skill.

As to whether Prabhakaran was involved in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, isn't it fair to wait till the Indian court delivers its verdict? It is interesting to note here that recently, Sessions Judge P. Lakshmana Reddy of the Visakhapatnam court in India ruled that the Indian navy and coast guard had unlawfully intercepted and boarded [Tiger vessel] *M. V. Ahat* three years ago. An Indian magazine said this ruling was a "slap in the face of the team probing Rajiv Gandhi's assassination." In my opinion, Prabhakaran was framed by RAW because he stood on his own rather than become India's puppet.

Lastly, if Asiaweek thinks that Suharto's horrendous record on democratic ideals is irrelevant in ranking him as a great leader of Asia, why has Prabhakaran to be judged by a different yardstick in his quest to achieve his dream?

TIMES PAST
THE TIMES
FUTURE

Sir I respond to your editorial of 23rd July titled DEFEAT FOR PEACE

In the wake of Sri Lanka's military debacle at Mullaitivu, THE TIMES, London, published an editorial comment on July 23, under the headline "Defeat for Peace: A tragic reverse in the war against Tamil separatists". Professor Kopan Mahadeva sends us this open letter to the Editor THE TIMES:

Ordinary Sri Lankans, including the most-suffering Tamils, showed hopes for peace in recent years with all Presidents except the Interim Mr. D. B. Wijetunge. J. R. Jayewardene had the needed two-thirds majority, legal acumen, and experience to change the Constitution and create lasting peace. He tried to do that loopsidedly, and finally only consolidated executive power for the presidency. Peace prospects were, in my opinion, highest during Mr. R. Premadasa's time. As a leader he had practical wisdom and grass-roots experience with a soft-corner for social justice, but used undemocratic, secretive methods and was killed prematurely and mysteriously. Mrs. Kumaratunga rose on a mandate for peace-building through talks with the LTTE, promising also to abolish the Executive Presidency by July 1995, but has accomplished neither, despite her media-catching positive utterances. You are right that hopes for peace are years-away from now. But it was all foreseeable, and due to her own faults.

To build a lasting peace, Sri

Rebuttals

Lanka's unitary constitution must be changed to federalistic, as is presentlhy accepted by many, but with maximum autonomy to the regional democratic states. The Northeast region with its Tamil predominance must remain a single state, with, perhaps, re-demarcation of boundaries. A central link-union of regional states would help to keep the island together, and serve in co-ordination, training, economic collaboration, foreign affairs and so on, but must be forged with the active concurrence of the region-states rather than be centrally forced down.....

The £550 millions per year military budget to which you refer, is wealth wasted from foreign aid, generously given by world nations depriving their own citizens of better lives for themselves, sadly to promote racial and religious chauvinism in Sri Lanka, for a few feudal Sinhala families to continue to enjoy power - not for the real and long term benefit of any race or religion, not even of their own Sinhalese people.....

I am not myself a supporter or practitioner of violence, except in self-defence, and only in proportion, when absolutely necessary, like most of my British fellow-citizens. Hence I will not write in support of LTTE's actions if I had even an iota of doubt that they are really terrorists. I do believe that they will return to peaceful and democratic political life once a reliable compromise is worked out, where justice and equality will be assured to Tamils in Sri Lanka. But they believe, as I myself and also many other Tamils and even Sinhalese now do, that Mrs. Kumaratunge has lost political credibility, much against our earlier expectations. The whole world will soon realise this fact.

"Your editorial is topically apt, but one-sided, misleading, and overtly supportive of a blundering Government..."

You conclude your editorial with the words, "Isolating the LTTE is important. Mrs. Kumaratunga's plan is still Sri Lanka's best hope. As she struggles to recover lost ground, she deserves what little support the outside world can offer". I am really baffled and surprised by this 'invocation', that too from your esteemed chair. Let me explain why.

"The fall of Jaffna really closed the door for political peace. The best way out for her at the present is to get her forces out of Jaffna..."

By isolating, if she means isolating LTTE from Tamil people, that is a miscalculation. It can never happen unless and until Tamils secure all their due rights. But once that true, as you say, the Tamil population is exhausted. So also, the Sinhalese are almost exhausted with warfare and political bickerings, and jockeying for power by politicians....

But as a people with a history of atrocities against them, as you have pointed out, which is still going on, and as 'heirs-aspirant' to nationhood of their own, recogniseds now even by a world encyclopaedia, they cannot be isolated form their 'LTTE-ideals'. Even the Tamil groups who are seemingly supporting Mrs. Kumaratunge have not accepted her plan in-toto, and are lobbying for political compromise with the LTTE, denouncing Mrs. Kumaratunga's militaristic policies.

The preamble to Mrs. Kumaratunga's original plan underlines Sri Lanka's best hope for peace, but not the later versions, as anyone who has carefully read both would conclude. But again, even if she produces a draft based on her original preamble, how is she going to win UNP's support to obtain two-thirds parliamentary majority, and then get it accepted by the citizens at a referendum? These would merely remain imaginative, unless she firstly evolves a draft acceptable to the Tamils and then goes for fresh elections on that mandate and returns with over 67% majority, ceasing all aggression.

She made a mistake by capturing Jaffna because she thereby lost the moral support of all Tamils, who do feel humiliated. The fall of Jaffna really closed the door for political peace. The best way out for her at the present is to get her forces out of Jaffna, invite the LTTE for unconditional talks on an agreed form of a new constituion, with an interim provincial government in power in the Northeast with LTTE majority or thier support from without, and go for fresh elections on that mandate.

If she does these, she would then deserve all the support the world outside can give her to forge a lasting peace in Sri Lanka not weapons, but diplomatic support at peace-talks and for follow-up action to ensure implementation of agreements reached.

Your editorial is topically apt, but one-sided, misleading, and overtly supportive of a blundering Government, I hope yoy accept this, my plea for a balanced understanding.

14th August 1996

Prof. Kopan Mahadeva,
Birmingham, B23 5XA.

Rebuttals

HOT SPRING reader N.Singam of Toronto takes issue with the Editor of the TORONTO STAR, Canada, which carried an ill-conceived editorial comment in its issue of July 28, under the headline SRI LANKAN HORROR:

I felt my blood boiling when I read through your editorial on "Sri Lankan Horror" appearing in today's Toronto Star.

I am sure most Tamils, regardless of whether they support the Tamil Tigers or not, would have felt the same way.

First of all, before you sit to write such nonsense through your prejudiced head, you ought to do some home work on Ceylon's history and the facts about the current situation in that country.

If you have the real facts and real heart, you should now be writing to condemn the indiscriminate aerial bombings and shelling that are being conducted by the Sinhalese military in a cowardly manner against innocent Tamil civilians in the Ceylon's northern mainland, since 18th July, 1996. Your column is clearly the exhibition of an infantile mind that has been raised to a place of eminence which it does not deserve. Credibility of the Toronto Star, as an impartial newspaper, is now dead and buried with the innocent Tamils who have been killed in bombings by Sinhalese Supersonic jet fighters in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

TORONTO STAR

> ***"Credibility of the Toronto Star, as an impartial newspaper, is now dead and buried with the innocent Tamils who have been killed in bombings by Sinhalese Supersonic jet fighters in the North and East of Sri Lanka"***

President Chandrika's proposal which you mis-called "genuine peace plan", have never given any hope to any Ceylon Tamil in or outside of Ceylon. In fact, these proposals were hurriedly prepared soon after the war recommenced in April,1995, just to deceive the international community from whom the Sinhalese racist regime of President Chandrika sought financial and military aid. When the proposals were originally made public in August, 1995, they appeared to constitute a small bucket of water with which President Chandrika hoped to put out the burning blaze of Tamil Nationalism that had come into existence as a result of over 45 years of discrimination and persecution of the Tamil nation in Ceylon. However, soon after the proposals were made public, the Sinhalese racist elements within Chandrika's own government such as Cabinet Minister Srimani Athulathmudali, and the racist Buddhist clergy who have long been a disgrace to the great religion they belonged, vehemently protested against the proposals claiming that too much was being offered to the Tamils under the proposals. When the government released the legal draft of the proposed constitutional amendments in January, 1996, it was evident that most of the water in the bucket had already leaked through the crack caused by the said pro-government Sinhalese racist elements. That draft is now being further amended to accomodate more racist demands of other Sinhalese racists.

Even the moderate Tamils who have lost all their relevancy in Tamil politics long long ago, now feel that they have been deceived by the Sinhalese government. History has not forgotten that the then Prime Minister Solomon Bandaranaike, President Chandrika's late father, also agreed to establish Regional Councils in Ceylon in 1958, and tore up that agreement with the Tamil leaders even before the ink was dry on the document. **Perhaps, it was the fate of the so-called moderate Tamils that they have to be deceived by both the father and the daughter, both playing the same trick. A person who fails to learn even after a bitter experience and who falls prey for the same trick twice, is, moderate of otherwise, unfit to speak on behalf of a nation.**

The coalition government headed by President Chandrika, has only a single majority in the Sri Lankan Parliament. UNP, the major opposition party had already declared (long before the Colombo train bomb blast or the Mullativu attack) that it would not support any constitutional amendments that would change the unitary nature of the Sri Lankan State. Constitutional amendments would require the support of two-thirds majority in the Paliament and approval of the whole country in a referendum. More than any body else, President Chandrika herself has known, since the day the proposals were made public in August, 1996, that such support and approval cannot be obtained. But, she would not admit that for fear she might lose international financial aid. Sir, this is the game that Sinhalese politicians have played for about half-a-century since the British left Ceylon in 1948, after granting the Ceylonese, the so-called indepence. Where on earth did you get the information that President Chandrika

Rebuttals

offered "maximum autonomy" to the "Hindu Tamil North"? Tamil homeland consists of the North and East, not just the North, and Tamils, although predominantly Hindu, have considerable percentage of Christians and muslims whose mother tongue is Tamil too. Check your information, please.

The Tigers and the Tamils want peace. But not the kind of peace that prevails at a cemetery. We want peace with justice, dignity and liberty. We do not want peace at any cost. Tamils must have weapons. Prabakaran is not going to take anything less than what Arafat was given. Mr. Editor, Tamils have a long and bitter experience of broken promises and abrogated pacts with the Sinhalese politicians over the last 40 years. **As far as we know, there are only two Sinhalese politicians who could be trusted - the dead (as long as they remain dead) - and the unborn (as long as they remain unborn).**

> ***The Tigers and the Tamils want peace. But not the kind of peace that prevails at a cemetery. We want peace with justice, dignity and liberty. We do not want peace at any cost.***

Capture of Jaffna which resulted in the killing of dozen of innocent Tamil civilians and which caused a mass exodus of hundreds of thousands of Tamils from the peninsula in October - December, 1995, was celebrated as a Sinhalese victory over the Tamils, in a feudal - style ceremony by the Colombo government. We, the Tamils, now have every right to be jubilant over the defeat of the Sinhalese army. Now, once again, the Sinhalese forces are bombing and shelling the unfortunate Tamil victims of the earlier military operations, causing more deaths and destruction. Arrest, torture, rape, detention and/or extra-judicial execution of innocent Tamils by Sri Lankan government forces, is being done on an unprecendented level in all parts of Ceylon, since 18th July, 1996. Complete censorship imposed by the Sinhalese government on all war-related news, make it impossible for the world to become aware of this butchery. But Tamils all over the world get accurate information, thanks to the Tigers' communication network. We get even names, ages, and addresses of our parents, siblings and friends who get killed, with the dates and places of the killings. And such information is always confirmed by letters we receive later from our relatives back home.

The Sinhalese government forces at the Mullaitivu camp who had ample stock of sophisticated weapons at their command, were so badly defeated in spite of the support they received from Supersonic jet fighters, helicopter gunships and Chinese made naval gun boats, because they did not have one important weapon that Americans, British, French or Chinese would never be able to give them. That weapon is bravery, fearlessness or courage. Noooooo body in the world can give the Sinhalese forces this weapon! And, Tigers have ample stock of this...

Western countries should realize that the more financial or military aid they give to Sri Lanka, the more Tamil refugees they will find at their doors, bleeding and crying for asylum. Sinhalese Sri Lanka uses all the aid it receives to buy gun-boats, Supersonic jet bombers, helicopters, tanks and even chemical weapons to use against the Tamils. Helping the Tamils to achieve freedom, on the other hand, would stop the inflow of refugees to the West.

You call Prabakaran " a cowardly terrorist". How would you call Chandrika, who, as the Defence Minister, heads the Terrorists in Uniform of the Sri Lankan military who are bombing and shelling innocent Tamil refugees at Kilinochchi town and elsewhere in the North? An angel? Do you know that 99.9% of Tamils killed in such indiscriminate military operations are non-combatant Tamil civilians? And, do you also know that dozens of such Tamils are killed daily in the North-East? **Why cannot the Sinhalese civilians, whose husbands, fathers and sons are doing the bombing and shelling against innocent Tamils, also taste a little bit of the stuff occassionally? Tigers have, however, denied they were responsible for the recent train bomb blast. And, I would rather prefer to believe them, that the Sinhalese police who only a few years ago killed opposition leader Lalith Athulathmudali and put the blame on the Tamil youth by the name of Ragunathan who they (the police) killed after the youth was arrested by them. Ragunathan was an LTTE terrorist sent from the North to kill Lalith, the police claimed.**

Your editorial has definitely prompted a rethink at least among the over 100,000 Tamils in Toronto like me who have been buying your newspaper regularly over the years and those Tamil carriers who deliver your newspaper in Toronto. We now think: Should we continue to buy and/or deliver this newspaper that published pages of newsreports when just one scud missile from Saddam Hussein fell on Israeli territory, and which turns a blind eye and deaf ear at the plight of the Eelam Tamils who have been, and are continuing to be, bombed and shelled by the military terrorists of the Sinhalese government, almost daily over the last six years?

Thank You:
Yours truly,
(N. Singam)
(416) 756-7928

RECENTLY WED

Visuvathasas Thirunavukarasu of Iyanar St. Pt. Pedro and Shanthi Selvarajah of 11, Sydney Road, Rayners Park, London, SW 20 8EG on 18 August at Sri Ganapathy Temple, Effra Road, Wimbledon, London SW 19.

Mahajan Padmanathan son of Dr. & Mrs K.S.Padmanathan and Dilani, daughter of Mr & Mrs Noel Rajaratnam of 103a Malvern Avenue, S Harrow, Middx HA2 9ER on 31st August.

VIOLIN ARANGETRAM

Nirshanthan & Parthiban sons of Dr. & Mrs. Nagarajah and disciples of Dr. Lakshmi Jayan, took place on 1 September, '96 at the Beck Theater, Grange Road, Hayes, Middx UB3 2UE.

OBITUARIES

Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra

Professor Sarachchandra, the doyen of Sinhala letters and Sinhala theatre passed away on August 16 at the age of 82.

His play Maname staged in 1956, blazed a new trail in Sinhala drama, and for which he drew inspiration from both traditional Japanese theatre and Tamil nadagams. A winner of the Magsaysay award in 1989, he was Sri Lanka's ambassador in Paris in the 70s.

For a man of such eminence, even he was not spared from direct attacks of thuggery on his person, during the rule of President Jayewardene in 1982. With the Colombo Press too scared to condemn the attack, it was left to SATURDAY REVIEW, published in Jaffna, to deplore the incident. Following is an excerpt from the editorial of July 31,1982 of the SATURDAY REVIEW, a paper that was banned by the Jayewardene government the following July:-

Among the most quote-worthy remarks on the subject of Culture that we remember was the one credited to Field Marshal Hermann Goering, who was one of the pillars of Adolf Hitler's Nazi establishment of the 1940s. Said Goering: "When I hear anyone talk of Culture, I reach for my revolver". We have no doubt that a similar violent feeling must have inspired the thugs who laid their hands and paws on Dr.Ediriweera Sarachchandra when he attempted to speak on Sinhala culture at the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress hall on the 2lst July.

Dr. Sarachchandra is no ordinary name. If there was one person in the packed gathering who could be singled out as most representative of Sinhala culture, it was probably, Dr.Sarachchandra himself. He was one time Professor of Sinhala Language and Literature at the University of Ceylon Peradeniya, a playwright and producer, and a former Ambassador at the cultural capital of Paris. His play Maname has come to remain as a major landmark in the evolution of Sinhala Drama. And if this man could be dragged off the stage in public in a hall belonging to the Buddhist Congress on a platform sponsored by men who talk shrilly of Sinhala glory and pride, and kicked on the head and face with shod feet, well, even though Dr.Sarachchandra was not allowed to complete his speech he had made his point - there is a demonstrable decline in Sinhala Buddhist culture!

It was probably no accident that the hoodlums kept kicking the fallen intellectual on the head and nowhere else. It was thuggery against the MIND...

Albert Sextus Joseph

Albert Sextus Joseph (55), son of Joseph Vaz Somasundram and Saveriachi Somasundram, passed away while playing cricket for St. Patrick's college O.B.A. at the JSSA tournament held in Southall on 26-08-96. He leaves behind his mother, brothers and sisters, Maris Stella, Robert, Richard and Juliet, wife Miriam nee Joachim, children Mia Lushilani, Mino Angeline and Suresh Julian. He played a very active part in local Church and Tamil affairs and will be missed by his many friends and relatives.

11, Colston Close, Calcot, Reading, Berks.

Rose Parimalam Thurairatnam

Rose Parimalam Thurairatnam, relict of I.P.Thurairatnam Principal, Union College, Tellipallai, mother of Dr. Harichandran (N.Z.), Balan (Zambia), Sarojini Paramanathan (N.Z.), Dr. Manoharan (Saudi Arabia), Sakunthala Kunanayagam (Colombo), Mahendran (N.Z.), and Dr. Mithradevi Niranjanan (U.K.) passed away in her 90th year in Colombo on 25th August.

5, Barrie Pavement, Wickford, Essex SS 12 9 DR

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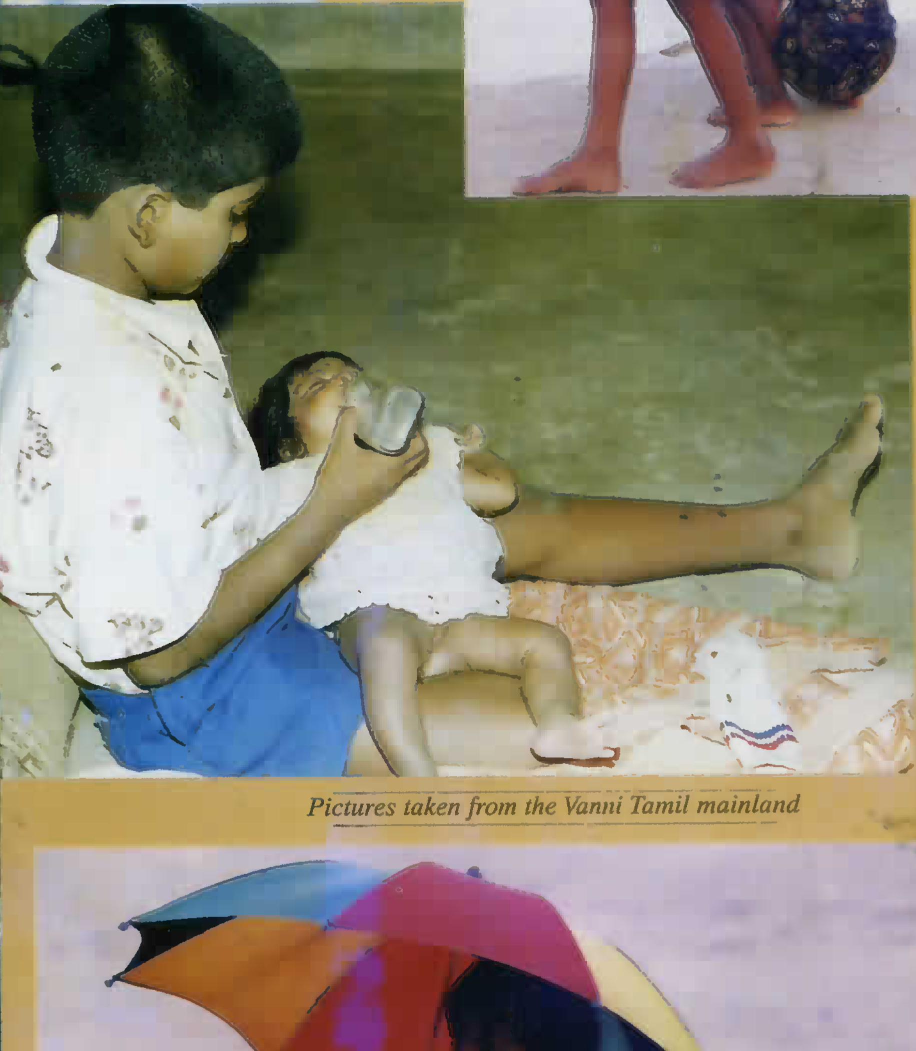
Sri Lanka deprives Tamil children of their Childhood!



Pictures taken from the Vanni Tamil mainland